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"THE APOSTLES' DOCTRINE AND FELLOWSHIP."

FIVE SERMONS

PREACHED IN THE PRINCIPAL CHURCHES OF HIS DIOCESE,

DURING

HIS SPRING VISITATION, 1844.

BY THE

RT. REV. L. SILLIMAN IVES, D. D., LL. D.,

BISHOP OF NORTH CAROLINA.

Published by the unanimous request of his Convention.



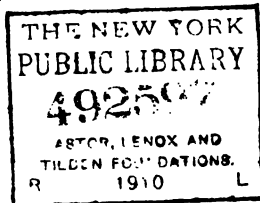
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1844



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NEW YORK
JAN 18
1910

TO THE RT. REV. L. SILLIMAN IVES, D. D., BISHOP OF
NORTH CAROLINA.

Washington, N. C., May 27th, 1844.

RT. REV AND DEAR SIR :

We have been appointed by the Convention of this Diocese, whose session has just closed, to communicate to you the unanimous request of the Convention, that you will consent to the publication of the five Sermons which you have recently preached in the principal Churches of this Diocese. We cannot forbear to add the expression of the high satisfaction with which we listened to these discourses, and of our conviction that the publication of them will be of eminent service to the cause of Christ and His Church.

We are, Rt. Rev. and dear Sir,
Most respectfully and affectionately,
Your Brethren in Christ.

F. M. HUBBARD,
R. S. MASON,
J. SINGLETARY,
S. J. JOHNSTON,
JONA. H. JACOCKS,
JOSIAH COLLINS,
JOHN S. EATON.

TO THE REV. MESSRS. HUBBARD, MASON, &c., &c.

Raleigh, June 2d, 1844.

DEAR BRETHREN :

In communicating to you, under shelter of your too favorable judgment, my consent to the publication of my *five discourses*, I feel it my duty to remind you of a wish expressed by me to the Convention, that no pecuniary responsibility, on this account, should be incurred by the Diocese ; but that all risk of the publication should devolve upon the Author.

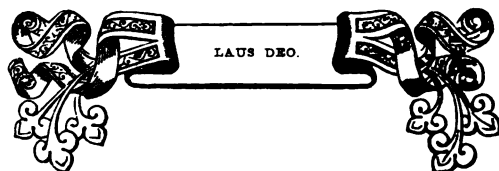
My object in preparing these discourses, was to do what I might, by the help of God, to protect His truth from harm at this time of extraordinary confusion on matters of Faith ; a confusion growing out of unfounded and indiscriminate charges against Church-Catholic doctrine, as *Romish heresy* ;

thus unsettling the minds of some, and threatening loss to the Church of Jesus, and to the souls for which He died. Hence I felt called upon, as a Christian Bishop, to attempt something within my proper sphere, to avert the growing evil, by placing before you in a scriptural light some of those fundamental verities upon which, as Churchmen, we rest our hopes of heaven. That I have so far succeeded as to secure your united approbation, is matter to me of heart-cheering encouragement amid the arduous and trying labors of my Episcopal office. In addition, I ask only the blessing of God upon these labors, that they may redound to His glory, and the advancement of His Holy Church.

With daily prayers for your welfare, and affectionate regard for you as my fellow-laborers, I remain, dear brethren,

Your faithful friend and servant in Christ,

L. SILLIMAN IVES.



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SERMON I.

THE CASE OF THE FIRST CONVERTS.

O ALMIGHTY GOD, WHO, BY THY SON JESUS CHRIST, DIDST GIVE TO THY APOSTLE SAINT PETER MANY EXCELLENT GIFTS, AND COMMANDEDST HIM EARNESTLY TO FEED THY FLOCK ; MAKE, WE BESEECH THEE, ALL BISHOPS AND PASTORS DILIGENTLY TO PREACH THY HOLY WORD, AND THE PEOPLE OBEDIENTLY TO FOLLOW THE SAME, THAT THEY MAY RECEIVE THE CROWN OF EVERLASTING GLORY, THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD. AMEN.



I.

THE CASE OF THE FIRST CONVERTS.

Acts ii. 37.—Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the Apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?

THE work of our Saviour's mission had just been accomplished. The foundation of His scheme of mercy to guilty men had just been laid in His death, resurrection, ascension, and the gift of the Holy Ghost. The institution, of which He was the declared Head, which was to embody, develope, and apply for man's salvation, the principles and benefits of His redemption—glimpses of which only had here and there appeared in His public teaching—had just been committed, under His guidance, to the oversight of the twelve apostles and their successors "to the end of time." In the text, brethren, we are presented with

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the first inspired notice of the effect of this institution, in its application to the wants of those for whom it was established. The divine Redeemer "has ascended up on high and received gifts for men." The Holy Ghost, in His fullest measure, has been shed upon the Church. The first assembly has met to listen to her message from heaven. Her teachers arise by command and in the strength of their Lord, to proclaim His truth. Their words are suited to the moral state of their hearers. They unfold the startling fact, that He whom they had crucified is "both Lord and Christ;" that the blood which in awful temerity they had imprecated upon themselves and their children, is the blood of the Son of the most High God. The word found its way to their conscience. The sword of the Spirit pierced to their inmost souls. "They were pricked in their hearts, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the Apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?"

This record, I say, calls our attention to the earliest effects of the Gospel upon the hearts of men, and to the earliest development of the Gospel itself as a system of "grace and truth by Jesus Christ."¹ Some of its leading principles, it is true, had already been promulgated by Him; but in a

1) John i. 17.

manner so diffuse and abstract as to render their meaning and force doubtful. These principles, however, are now, through the instrumentality of the Church, in the progress of being collected together, and defined, and illustrated in their application. And this is done under the infallible direction of His Spirit who is "the Author and Finisher of the Faith."¹ No one at all conversant with the most effectual modes of communicating truth, can fail to perceive the immense value, to the clear understanding of God's will, of this first, this practical exposition of the Gospel. It would seem, indeed, to be an infallible interpreter to Christ's followers. Other men may speculate, and theorize, and run into wild extremes, or "be driven about by every wind of doctrine;"² but so long as this book of the Acts of the Apostles is preserved to us—this record of the exemplification of gospel principles, *in the practice of inspired men*—remains in our hands, we can be at no loss for means, either to detect error, or keep to the simplicity of truth; and hence can have no excuse for distrust or doubtfulness in regard to the fundamental Faith. If, with this record in our hands, we err, the fault must be our own—must be traced to the temper of our minds.

1) Heb. xii. 2.

2) Eph. iv. 14.

We live in a singular day;—a day of unpled strife, and uncertainty, and wandering to and fro for the truth;—a day in which the rapid waves and shiftings of professed belief tell too plainly of utter want in religion of fixed principles; and a great danger to us all of being entangled in the growing skepticism; drawn into the swelling tumultuous current of spiritual licentiousness drifting away, in our self-sufficiency, from the sure anchorage, “the rock Christ Jesus.” Our duty, then, can be more urgent than our return to “the first principles of the doctrine of Christ.” Our careful review of the fundamental verities, which, as Churchmen, we profess to build our lives upon of heaven. Every priest at our altar has vowed before God, “*so* to minister the doctrine and sacraments and the discipline of Christ, *as* the Lord hath commanded, and *as* this church hath received the same, so that he may teach the people with all diligence to keep and observe the same.”² What, then, if “the ambassador for Christ”³ is under such solemn obligations to teach, you, good people, must be under equal obligations to observe. I shall make no apology, then, for recalling to your mind, some of

1) Heb. v. 12, vi. 1.

2) THE FORM AND MANNER OF ORDERING PRIESTS.

3) 2 Cor. v. 20.

great practical truths, which enter into the authorized teachings of the church, as "the witness and keeper of Holy Writ."¹ In doing so, I propose to confine myself to the discussion of those truths made plain in the passing of the first converts to Christianity, under the Apostles, from a state of condemnation, to one of salvation—one of fellowship with Jesus Christ.

1. The first sermon after the descent of the Holy Ghost produced the effects recorded in the text. The multitude, to the number of three thousand or more, "are pricked in their heart,"—that is, deeply convicted of sin—made conscious of personal guilt and danger. This result, however, came not from the simple force of truth. Such truth, in substance, had already been uttered by the Son of God, and enforced by miracles; but with little perceptible effect. Now, however, a pervading energy seems to give point to every word, and make it efficacious with almost every heart. We feel that a new influence is at work—a new hand extended for our help. We begin to realize, in the deep thoughts, the earnest convictions of the multitude, something of that promise of Jesus—"When the Comforter is come, He will convince the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment."² It is manifest to us, that

1) Art. XX.

2) John xvi. 8.

the blessed Comforter has come; that the mighty Spirit who had filled the hearts of the Apostles and given them "cloven tongues like as of fire,"¹ now infuses His holy energy into their words, and makes them "sharper than any two edged sword."²

And here we see the character of the Gospel as a spiritual dispensation; a dispensation of life and grace, addressing itself, through outward, instituted channels, to the dead and alienated hearts of fallen men;—bringing to them from Christ, the Head of the church, the offer of His favor, and the power to return to an offended God, through fellowship with Him;—thus arousing anew their sensibilities, subduing their pride, cleansing away their impurity, restoring their confidence, enkindling their love, and mingling their affections in the holy and eternal communion of saints. Here, then, we have the solemn lesson—a lesson so humbling to our pride—of our great moral needs, and of the only, but all-sufficient source of our help; that "we are not sufficient of ourselves to think anything, as of ourselves; but that our sufficiency is of God."³ We have an insight, too, into the meaning of many of our Lord's sayings—especially that, to the Jews, *hard saying*—"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me

1) Acts ij. 3.

2) Heb. iv. 12.

3) 2 Cor. iii. 5.

draw him;”¹ and of that other saying—“without me ye can do nothing;”² and of what the holy church confesseth on her knees before God,—“All holy desires, all good counsels, all just works proceed from Him,”³ and “without Him, nothing is strong, nothing is holy.”⁴

The case of the first converts, however, shows, (1) that the operation of the Holy Ghost upon our hearts is limited by our freedom of will; (2) that His gifts are dispensed to us not at once in their full measure, but in different and increasing degrees, according to our faithful diligence in the use of certain prescribed means; and (3) that His work within us consists in impressing and invigorating our moral nature, and not in communicating knowledge to our minds;—this being the office of the external revelation of God’s will.

(1.) That the operation of the Holy Ghost upon the hearts of the first converts did not infringe their freedom of will, is clear from the manner in which they were approached and treated by the Gospel. It appealed to them as reasonable, accountable moral agents; set before them life and death, and left the

1) John vi. 24.

2) 1b. xv. 5.

3) Collect *Evening Prayer*.

4) Collect for *Fourth Sunday after Trinity*. See also Collects for *First, Ninth, Eleventh, Thirtieth, Fifteenth, Sixteenth, Seventeenth, Eighteenth, and Nineteenth Sundays after Trinity*

responsibility of choice with themselves. It bestowed its blessings, too, according to their readiness to receive them. "When they *heard* this"—willingly opened their ears to the word—a holy compunction sprang up in their hearts. "They that gladly *received* the word, were *baptized*"¹—agreeably to the words of the holy John, "as many as *received* Him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God."²—agreeably, too, to the words of Jesus Himself, when displaying the Gospel in its overflowing fulness, and offering its rich benefits to the needy ;—"If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink ;"³ and "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."⁴

(2.) It is manifest also, in the case of the first converts, as I remarked, that the gifts of the Holy Ghost were dispensed, not at once in their full measure, but in different and increasing degrees, according to the faithful use of certain prescribed means. The principle here involved, is exhibited in the text ; while the facts, showing that this principle is carried out to the full extent of the proposition, are connected with it, and will be adduced in their proper place. For the present we will confine our attention in regard to this point, to the instruction of the text. The first influence of the divine Spirit, as here made known

1) Acts ii. 41. 2) John i. 12. 3) Ib. vii. 37. 4) Ib. vi. 37.

accompanied the simple preaching of the Gospel; and consisted in convincing of sin, and producing a desire to escape it, and to return in righteousness unto God. The assembly "were pricked in their heart;" and made to inquire, in a spirit of humble submission, "what they should do to be saved?" This was the first mark of their conversion, and the first step (and an important step it was) towards their regeneration. They had much reason to be thankful for it, and to make devout acknowledgment of it to God. But the relation of no personal *experience* is heard—no boasting of great attainments—no declaration of the forgiveness of sins—of an inward illumination—of a sensible enjoyment of the divine presence. No: these converts had words to express only their unworthiness—their guilt—their deep spiritual necessity. All that they pleaded, before their baptism, shows only a sense of want, and a desire to be filled. And this, too, notwithstanding the day on which they were converted, was one of special and miraculous effusion of the Holy Ghost, when, if on any occasion, they might have looked for His sensible and plenary communications. But no: they feel nothing, at this, the earliest stage of their spiritual course, but a painful sense of deficiency, and a longing for the supplies of knowledge and grace. "We are in want, in danger, in a state of ungrateful disobedience; Sirs, Sirs, what

shall we do?" And this feeling characterizes, so far as we have any account, every case of conversion in the New Testament. All are bowed before the Holy One in deep humility; under a sense of guilt and insufficiency. Not a single instance can be adduced where the convert *declared* any experience of change from darkness to light, or laid claim to any spiritual possession whatever. A conviction of personal unworthiness, and a desire to attain a better state, is all that appears. The only change manifest in their case, is from indifference to earnestness—from pride to humility—from self-confidence to absolute reliance upon God.

Take the case of the persecuting Saul. His conversion is extraordinary. He is convinced of his error by a miracle. And yet, when truth has had its effect, and he lies in the dust of self-abasement before his injured Saviour, what is his *experience*? All is told in one short sentence—"LORD, *what wilt thou have me to do*?"¹ So with the eunuch, and the jailor, and the rest. All are distinguished only for their humility, and modesty, and freedom from every pretence. The case of the father, who, before the establishment of the Gospel, came to Jesus in behalf of his possessed child, will hardly be pleaded as an ex-

1) Acts ix. 6.

ception, although he affirmed—"Lord, I believe." For, as if feeling that the words savored somewhat of presumption, he immediately added—"Help thou mine unbelief."¹ Neither the case of the eunuch, after its establishment, when he declared his belief in the simple fact, that "Jesus Christ is the Son of God;"² which was the profession of Christ before men, always required at holy baptism. The cases of conversion recorded in the New Testament seem really so many apt illustrations of the view which our Lord Himself gave of this grace, when "He took a little child and set him in the midst of the disciples and said, except ye be converted and *become as little children*, ye cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven;" and also of the principle set forth in those other declarations—"Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled;"³ "He filleth the hungry with good things, and the rich He sendeth empty away."⁴ We see, then, that the operation of God on the heart of man, in conversion, or the first stage of his spiritual progress, produces only a sense of deep spiritual want—a renunciation of self, and a turning to Christ as "Head over all things unto his church,"⁵ for pardon and the higher gifts of grace;

1) Mark ix. 24.

2) Acts viii. 37.

3) Matt. v. 6.

4) Luke i. 53.

5) Eph. i. 22.

thus ensuring to the convert the fulfillment of Christ's promise—"To them that hear shall more be given."¹

(3.) Besides, this effect of the Holy Ghost on the first converts, was confined to their *moral* nature; was realized in the revival of good dispositions in their hearts; and not in the communication of knowledge to their minds. We hear from them no positive assurance that they are right—that they have passed from death unto life, and are certain of salvation, because they *feel* it to be so with them. No word of this kind betrays a blinding self-conceit—a presumptuous reliance upon what they suppose to be light within.² On the contrary, they plead, notwithstanding their conversion, only their ignorance; evince

1) Mark iv. 24.

2) I have been struck with the change, on this subject, which took place, as related by Mr. Southey, in the mind of Mr. Wesley before his death. "In his old age, he said to Mr. Melville Horne these memorable words:—'When fifty years ago my brother Charles and I, in *simplicity* of our hearts, told the good people of England that unless they *knew* their sins were forgiven, they were under the wrath and curse of God, I marvel, Melville, they did not stone us! The Methodists, I hope, know better now; we preach assurance, as we always did, as a common *privilege* of the children of God; but we do not enforce it, under pain of damnation, denounced on all who enjoy it not.'"—SOUTHEY'S *History of Methodism*, p. 145

The doctrine of Holy Scripture, in the Church, on this point, is, that having received, in holy baptism, the assurance of the forgiveness of his sins, the Christian has "the witness in himself" just in the degree that he submits, in heart and life, to the commands and institutions of God made known in his word.

only a fear of self-delusion and an anxious desire to be instructed in the right way by the Apostles;—"Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Their pride had been subdued by a divine influence—the carnal bias had been removed from their minds to enable them to "discern the things of the Spirit."¹ But these things had not yet been fully unfolded to them; and they humbly seek instruction from the inspired teachers of God. While they are dependent upon His grace for "the hearing ear and the understanding heart," they are made to rely upon his outward revelation for "the words of eternal life"—a knowledge of their duty as Christians.

2. The great principle here wrought out and made plain in the practice of believers under the Gospel—the principle of unquestioning submission to what God has revealed to his *church*, in opposition to the claims to divine illumination set up by *individuals*—calls for a more special notice.

The very attitude in which we stand to God as condemned sinners, is enough to show our utter dependence upon His will for mercy and help; while our state of absolute ignorance, in regard to spiritual things, tells with equal clearness, that all our knowledge of this will must come from His own revelation of it.

1) 1 Cor. ii. 11, 12, 13, 14.

The simple question is, has He condescended to make a revelation, and how? What we hear on every hand—and what we are rejoiced to hear—of the inestimable value of the Bible as the word of God, is a sufficient answer; shows clearly enough, that men believe, or profess to believe, that God has revealed in the written Gospel *the only plan whereby we can be saved*. We see, then, at a glance, our relation to this written Gospel. It is to us as the instrument which conveys from the sovereign the terms of pardon to the culprit under sentence of death. The condemned can add nothing—can alter nothing. He is emphatically helpless—bound by the sternest necessity to the conditions of pardon and restoration, which, in the condescension of sovereign mercy, are proposed to him. He has only to comply with the conditions and live, or reject them and suffer death. The very title of the Gospel itself, as “glad tidings” to us, shows this to be our relation to it—that it is the message of God, against whom we have rebelled, setting before us the *only* means of pardon and grace and eternal life.

Take another view of it. It is the remedy provided by divine wisdom for the maladies of our corrupt nature;—maladies, not only above the reach of human skill, but creating within us an aversion to what is thus prescribed for their cure by the divine Physi-

cian. Hence our moral state, disposing us as it does to take liberties with the Gospel—to modify, or in some way render it palatable by a mixture of our own conceit, proclaims what terrible consequences would inevitably follow from the exercise by us of a supposed right to diminish, or add aught to the word of God—that awful word, “one jot or tittle of which can in no wise fail.”¹

Besides, the gospel is a deep *mystery*. Every truth of it is infinitely above our comprehension. All its doctrines and events and institutions, in regard to their suitableness and modes of influence, are equally hidden in the depths of divine wisdom. Nothing is known by us, nothing can be known, beyond the mere fact that these things are appointed and brought about by God for our recovery from the fall; and if humbly submitted to on our part, will not fail to accomplish their end. This is not only true; but it is a truth for which God has condescended to give us the reason; viz., that by it he might humble that pride in man which exalts itself against His counsels.²

Hence we see the wisdom of that child-like submission to the inspired teaching of the Apostles, which marked the conduct of the first converts.

1) Matt. v. 18. Luke xvi. 17.

2) 1 Cor. i. 18, to end of chap.

And we see, too, in that submission the true spirit of obedience—the best, the only infallible proof of genuine conversion to God.

(1.) In applying this truth, we must bear in mind, that not only all acts of outward obedience, but also the character of all inward affections and emotions must be determined by the oracles of God; that, if a person be anxious to know whether he has undergone that change of heart made necessary by the Gospel, he must inquire—not what impulses or impressions he has felt—but how far his spirit and temper and deportment are in conformity with the Gospel itself. And just in proportion as he finds himself disposed to learn and practice, in the fear of God, the duties of this Evangelical covenant—no matter what may have been his feelings at any particular time—is he justified in supposing himself a converted man. To the Churchman this test is furnished in the baptismal vows, as explained in the Catechism. The question for him is—“Have I, from my heart, renounced the world, the flesh and the devil, in the sense in which the Gospel requires me to renounce them, as exhibited in my Catechism? Do I heartily believe all the articles of the Christian faith, as therein set forth? Am I earnestly, and above all things, and in reliance upon God’s grace, endeavoring to keep God’s holy will and commandments, and walk in the

same all the days of my life, according to my solemn vow, promise, and profession at the baptismal font?" If he cannot, in some good degree, affirm this, let him rest assured that no fancied change within will establish his claim before God to the character of a truly converted man.

(2.) Finally, in urging the necessity of conscientious adherence to God's written Gospel in determining our faith and practice; permit me to remind you of the peculiar demands of the present time—demands upon us all to submit implicitly to the decisions of this Gospel; to submit, I do not mean, to what men, in their pride of opinion, please to call the decisions of the Gospel, but to that which God has *REALLY decided* in His Gospel; to what He, as our offended Sovereign requires of us, his rebellious, condemned, and dependent creatures, in order to our salvation; and has handed down to us, from the Apostles through the instrumentality of His holy Church. Mere human opinion, however respectable the source, is worth literally nothing on the subject of the sinner's return to God. It may be the opinion of an Augustine, or a Gregory, or an Innocent, or a Calvin, or a Wesley; but it matters not, if Almighty God, through His own commissioned "witness and keeper of Holy Writ," gives it not His sanction. We cannot be too deeply impressed with the importance of this truth. If we

are to give heed to man's opinion *as such*,—which is really, in a majority of cases, little else than an expression of man's passion or conceit—we may as well have it professedly from the Koran or the Shaster, as from the Bible. Indeed, this individual opinion of man, as to what Almighty God *ought* to have revealed, or *must* have revealed, has taken the place of submission to what in truth God *has* revealed; and thus made men arrogant, self-confident, and dictatorial; rather than humble, reverent, inquiring, and fearful of mistaking or neglecting the least of God's requirements.

Let us advert to a few examples. Take the man who makes the plain, catholic sense of Holy Writ yield to his own conception of the fitness of things. Who refuses, for example, to admit the manifest Scriptural doctrine of the TRINITY, because he cannot comprehend, how it should be true; or who withholds his assent from the Scripture teaching on the sacraments, because he is unable to perceive how such important effects should result from such insignificant and unpromising means; who affirms, "the Gospel *cannot mean exactly what it says* on this subject, because its language is *not in agreement with our rational conceptions.*" Now, can it be doubted that such a person, instead of being governed by the simple principle—"Thus saith the

Lord," is, in fact, following "the imagination of his own heart;" and, so far as humble belief in the Gospel is concerned, might as well be a disciple of Mahomet, as a professed follower of Christ? Take another instance. Take the man who determines the truth of particular doctrines or systems—not by the simple teaching of God's word, but by what he sees, or supposes he sees, of their effects upon men; who denies, for example, the doctrine of *baptismal regeneration*, not because it is not taught in the New Testament, but because many persons baptized, do not bring forth in their lives, "the fruits of the Spirit;" or who maintains the propriety of the *revival system*, as it is called, not because any thing of the kind is found in the Gospel, but because, in his view, it has been instrumental to the conversion of sinners. Now, is not this sort of reasoning a virtual appeal from God to man; from what God has really instituted as the means of our return to him, to what man, after trial, thinks God *ought* to have instituted? Is not this habit of making our submission to revealed truth depend upon visible effects, virtually saying—"True, God has appointed in His word certain means for the attainment of His favour; but surely we have the liberty, if, after fair trial, we shall judge God's means ineffectual, to abandon them, and institute others in their place!" And this too, beloved, not-

withstanding, God has said—"Many are the devices of a man's heart, but *the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand*;"¹ and again, still more awfully, as the sealing sentence of His word—"I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this Book, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him, the plagues that are written in this Book. And if any man shall take from the words of the Book of this prophecy, God shall take his part out of the Book of life."² Dear brethren, these are terrible words. They should make us bow very low, very reverently, before the Revelation of God; make us watch narrowly over a proud mind, and a prying curiosity; and anxious only to discover and follow the requirements and intimations of the divine will; make us humbly bless God for the means, which, through the instrumentality of His holy Church, He has granted us in our Liturgy for understanding and following His written word. With this Liturgy in our hands, and humility in our hearts, we may surely learn and practice the will of the Holy One;—but not without *humility*. For, as St. Augustine saith, "the knowledge of Holy Scripture is a great, a broad, and high palace; but *the door* is very low, so that the high and arrogant man cannot get in. But he must stoop

1) Prov. xix. 21.

2) Rev. xxii. 18, 19.

low, and humble himself that would find entrance." Or, as our Homily saith—"Presumption and arrogance is the mother of all error. While the humble man may search boldly for the truth of Scripture without fear of error."

Beloved in Christ, an awful judgment is just before us! A judgment, that shall try every man's work! A judgment, the rule of which shall be the Gospel!¹ Not what each one shall have called the Gospel, or supposed to be the Gospel; but the Gospel as it *really* is. "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words,"² saith our Lord, "the same shall judge him at the last day." O what will it avail us, that on this day we seem to gain our point—convince ourselves of the truth of this or that system, and cry zealously, "Lord, Lord," if at the last day—that "day of wrath, that awful day," it shall be found that we have not done *the will of our Father* which is in heaven!"³ O, who can tell, who can conceive, the dreadful sorrows and disappointments of the hour, "when the master of the house has risen up and shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without and knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us—we have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and *thou hast taught in our streets*; but He shall say, I tell you, I

1) Rom. ii. 16.

2) John xii. 48.

3) Matt. vii. 21.

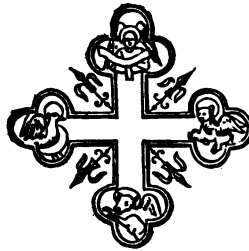
30 THE CASE OF THE FIRST CONVERTS.

know you not whence ye are ; depart from me :
workers of iniquity.”¹

Brethren, brethren, let us while we have t
bow meekly to the Cross of Christ; and take
yoke, *and learn of Him*, that at last, we may
rest to our souls.”²

1) Luke xiii. 26.

2) Matt. xi. 28, 29, 30.



SERMON II.

**THE CONDITIONS AND MEANS OF JUSTIFICATION TO ADULT
CONVERTS.**

in its plain, literal sense, is obvious for these reasons. It was addressed to a multitude—not trained, like ourselves, in the principles and phraseology of the Christian scheme, but totally destitute of such training;—a multitude, educated in different religious systems, and brought together, in the Providence of God, to hear for the first time the preaching of the Gospel—a circumstance, it must be admitted, showing the necessity of clearness and explicitness in the Apostle's answer. Besides, their question was no common one; in answering which, carelessness of expression would be attended with no serious consequences. But it was vital to their happiness—bore directly upon the pardon of their sins, and their eternal fellowship with Christ; hence involving in the character of the answer, St. Peter's fidelity in delivering his message. And when we turn to the answer itself, we find its language concise—its words few and emphatic—manifestly designed to express only that which was absolutely essential to the inquirers; designed not only to teach plainly, but also fundamentally—to teach *indispensable* truth. (2.) More than this, it was intended for the instruction of sinners in all ages of the Church. For the promise, based upon the conditions put forth in the text, was not only to the inquiring multitude, but “to their children, and to all that were afar off, even to as

many as the Lord our God should call.”¹ We, then, beloved, are as deeply interested in rightly understanding this answer of St. Peter, as were the assembly to whom it was addressed. Let us, then, casting off prejudice, yield our minds implicitly and prayerfully to this teaching of inspiration, on a question so awful in itself, and so eternal in its effects upon our destiny.

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins.”¹ You perceive that I have brought under present consideration only that part of the Apostle’s answer which relates to the *conditions and means of our justification* before God. I say, our *justification*; by which I mean, our being in a “state of salvation,”² or such a state as insures salvation or the favor of God, “through Jesus Christ our Saviour.”² The term justification may be expressed, accurately enough for our purpose, by the terms, “remission of sins,” and “regeneration, or being born again.” Hence all three of these terms will be used in the present discussion as implying the same thing.

1. The first condition of justification, enjoined in the text, is *Repentance*. “Peter said unto them, *Re-*

1) Acts ii. 38.

2) Church Catechism.

pent." I shall not here detain you to argue the *necessity* of this grace to our acceptance with God. That "except we *repent* we shall all perish,"¹ is certainly too plain and awful a truth, to be questioned by any believer in the Gospel ; while the fact of its universal admission renders argument needless, at least for my present purpose. I shall now ask your attention only to a few words on the *nature* of the duty here imposed ; erroneous views of which more or less prevail ; and from a cause especially fruitful in religious error. And this is twofold :—(1.) Failing to regard Christian duty, as having two parts—an inward and an outward, a soul and a body. (2.) And also as being uniformly connected with some other duty—being only one of the constituents of an effective whole. Hence Gospel repentance, being made up of inward aversion to sin, and outward renunciation of it—of a change of mind, and thereby a change of life—has been liable to perversions, by being restricted, on the one hand to the internal effect, or on the other to the external development. As the result of this double error, we have, as a substitute for repentance in its evangelical completeness, a system of *penance* in the one case, and of mere *impulses*, in the other. Our branch of the Catholic Church, however, adher-

1) Luke xiii. 3.

ing to holy Scripture, as understood by the early Fathers, embraces, in her view of repentance, both the inward and outward turning from sin; describing it, in her Catechism, as that change of mind "whereby we forsake sin;" forsake it in desire, intention, and act. Thus, as St. Augustine saith, "Repentance is a medicinal grief."¹ When, therefore, St. Peter, in his answer, called upon the multitude to "repent," he called upon persons already filled with "godly sorrow," and hence required of them something entirely beyond this—required that their sorrow should work in them "repentance,"²—move them to renounce, in thought, word, and deed, those sins of which they felt themselves guilty, and desired forgiveness.³ But this repentance, as Gospel repentance, embraced something more; connected itself with other parts of the scheme of salvation; implied, in its inward working, an humility which shrinks from all self-dependence, and turns the heart, in a spirit of unconditional surrender to the mercies of God in Christ. And hence in our justification it is more or less identified with faith and baptism, as in the text. Therefore, from the very days of the Apostles, the

1) Aug. in Ps. lviil.

2) 2 Cor. vii. 10.

3) St. Augustine saith again—*Pœnitentia vera est, pœnitenda non admittens, et admissa desinens* That repentance is true, which leads us to commit nothing more to be repented of, and to bewail sins already committed.—Aug. de Eccles. dogmat. c. 54.

Church has always required the candidate for holy baptism, to express his repentance by a public renunciation of "the world, the flesh, and the devil."¹

But repentance alone is not sufficient, according to the Gospel, for our justification. Baptism, in the *name of Jesus Christ*, must follow. Thus declares St. Peter: "Repent"—this is indispensable—"and be baptized," and "every one of you," and "in the name of Jesus Christ."—This "for the remission of sins" is equally indispensable. The words of the Apostle are explicit. The English translation of them is literal. And the whole scope of the New Testament, sustained by the voice of the universal Church for more than fifteen centuries after Christ, enforces their plain unsophisticated meaning. And it was not till the screws of human system were applied to them that they were forced to another sense.

2. Baptism, "in the *name of Jesus Christ*," then, is the next condition, imposed by St. Peter, for our justification.

The language, however, implies, as the essential element of the duty enjoined by it, *Faith*. For, surely, the converts would not have been called upon

1) Hence, in the Creed of Jerusalem, the expression is—"One baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." And Justin Martyr says—"One baptism of repentance and the knowledge of God, which was made for the sins of the people of God."—*Dial. Cum Triph.*

to be baptized in the name of one in whom they did not believe ; the main object of baptism being to confirm with such an one the most intimate relation. Besides, the *name of Christ* was doubtless put, by a common figure of speech, and to give it a peculiar significance to the Jews who had rejected Him, for the name of the Holy Trinity—being baptized into which was regarded as the very highest expression of one's faith in the scheme of redemption by Christ. Faith, then, is to be considered as the *second* thing enjoined by St. Peter upon the multitude. And in one sense, *living* faith ; but not *so* living, as we shall see, as to be relied upon ordinarily by the unbaptized for their justification.¹ Still we cannot be justified without it, as it is needful in an adult to the enjoyment of the benefits of holy baptism. It is made so in the answer of Philip to the Eunuch ;—" If thou *believest* with all thine heart, thou mayest."² And in the office for adult baptism, the Church calls upon the congregation, " not to doubt, but to earnestly believe that Christ will favorably receive the candidate, truly *repenting*, and coming unto him by *faith* ; also, in her Catechism, the answer to the question—" What

1) In those cases where baptism cannot be had, according to God's appointment, the want of " the outward, visible sign," will not necessarily deprive true faith of " the inward, spiritual grace."

2) Acts viii. 37.

is required of persons to be baptized?" is, "Repentance, whereby they forsake sin, and *faith*, whereby they steadfastly believe the promises of God, made to them in that sacrament;"—thus making the conditions of a full and effectual adult baptism precisely the same with those set forth by St. Peter in the text.

3. But with these, in order to the remission of sins, there is the third requirement, BAPTISM itself. A sacrament, the true bearing of which upon our soul's welfare, is so alarmingly kept out of view in our day, that one has need to tremble, lest he fall by the prevailing example of unbelief; kept out of view, notwithstanding its necessity to our justification, I do not hesitate to affirm, is rendered, by the ordinary law of the Gospel, as indispensable as that of faith or any other term of salvation; it being not only a condition, but also an instituted vehicle of God's grace and favor to our souls; "an outward visible sign, *and* an inward spiritual grace;"¹ "*water*, wherein the person is baptized, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," *and* "a *death unto sin*,

1) Church Catechism. "There are two parts in every Sacrament, as such; an *outward, visible sign*, and an *inward, spiritual grace*. Which being the integral or essential parts of a Sacrament, without either of which, it is *no Sacrament at all*, properly so called."—BR. BEVERIDGE on Cat. A work that should be in the hand of every parent.

"*Baptism*," says Bishop Hobart, "confers *remission of sins*," and cites for proof, *Acts* ii. 38, and xxii. 16. *Posth. Works*, vol. ii. p. 460.

justified, a man must both believe and be baptized. Now, I appeal to you, as sinners, dependent for your knowledge of the way of life upon the teaching of the Gospel, has any man among you a right—is he at all safe to suppose himself in a justified state, while destitute either of faith or baptism? Did our Lord, at any time, retract or modify these conditions of salvation?—conditions rendered more solemn and weighty by the fact of their having been made an important part of His final commission to the Twelve—a commission of few indispensable words, to be borne to all nations, and to the end of the world?¹

Suppose these conditions should be annexed to the enjoyment of an earthly estate; should be made conditions of a will conveying to you and your children an inheritance below. Suppose the will should run—“He among you that believeth and is baptized shall inherit this or that description of property;” would you for one moment imagine that a question could possibly be raised upon the meaning of an instrument so plainly worded? that the inheritance could, by any semblance of title, be yours—whatever might be

1) Mark xvi. 15.

“When He gave His disciples the commission of *regenerating* unto God, He said unto them—‘Go and disciple all nations, *baptizing* them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.’”—*1st. Adv. Har.* l. ii. c. 39.

your faith—without baptism? Aye, in that case, would you hesitate for an instant to make the most earnest and speedy preparation for receiving that holy sacrament?

Let us proceed in the argument. At the time when St. Paul exclaimed, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"¹ he is admitted by all to have been a converted man, and hence, in some degree, a believer. But was he *justified*? Were his sins forgiven, or washed away? Hear the language which, three days after, Ananias, who was sent by God to give him instruction, addressed to him—"Arise, *be baptized, and wash away thy sins.*"² What can be clearer than the fact, that the sins of St. Paul remained upon him, notwithstanding his wonderful conversion, till he was cleansed in holy baptism? Has another way been opened for the application of Christ's blood to the cleansing of our souls?

Now listen to the testimony of this same Apostle—"Know ye not, that so many as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized *into his death*?" that is, made partakers of the benefits—*justification* being one—of his sacrifice on the cross? To the end, that being thus "buried with him by baptism into death,"³ it might be to us "a death unto sin," fol-

1) Acts ix. 6.

2) Ib. xxii. 16.

3) Rom. vi. 2.

lowed by "a new birth unto righteousness."¹ Again, "Ye are all the children of God *by faith in Jesus Christ*. For as many of you as have been *baptized* into Christ, have *put on Christ*."² Now being made "the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ," certainly implies being in "a justified state;" but thus being made "the children of God by faith," is the same, according to these words of St. Paul, as "putting on Christ by baptism." Hence, is not the putting on Christ by baptism, the being placed into "a justified state?" Again, "Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it, *with the washing of water by the word*;"³ or as St. Chrysostom says, "by the words used in the form of baptism." Now what can this sanctifying and cleansing the members of Christ's body, the Church, with the washing of water by the word, mean, if not their purification, or forgiveness of sin, by baptism "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost?"⁴ Again, the Apostle represents the believers at Colosse, as having "put off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ," or by holy baptism; as is clear from his very next words: "Buried with Him by *baptism*, wherein also

1) Church Catechism. See Bp. Beveridge's explanation of this answer.

2) Gal. iii. 27.

3) Eph. v. 25, 26.

4) Matt. xxviii. 19.

put us into a state of salvation through faith in Christ.

The Apostolic Fathers, with one voice, taught the same doctrine. I have time to cite only a few passages.¹ St. Barnabas, living in the days of the Apostles, affirms that "men go down into the water with sins and pollutions;" and that "baptism procures the remission of their sins."² St. Hermes, of the same period, declares, that "in water we receive remission of sins;"³ and that this is according to "the established word of the Omnipotent." Justin Martyr, of the next age, teaches, that "provided men truly repent,

1) The following, among many others too numerous to cite, are worthy of the reader's notice. "While I lay in darkness, ignorant of true life, I used to think the second birth, which divine mercy promised for my salvation, a hard saying; as if a man could be quickened to a new life in the *laver of healing water*, so as to put off his natural self—be changed in heart and soul! But after that life-giving water succored me, washing away the stain of former years, and pouring into my cleansed and hallowed breast the light which comes from heaven; after I drank in the Heavenly Spirit, and was created into a new man by a second birth—then marvellously, what before was doubtful, became plain to me."—ST. CYRIL "On the Grace of God" in *Baptism*, p. 3.—145 years after the Apostles.

"Great indeed is the baptism offered you—it is the ransom of captives, the *remission of sins*, the *death of sin*, the regeneration of the soul," &c.—ST. CYRIL, *Prf. Cat.* (8) 16. iii. 15.—237 years after Apostles.

"Whence are we Christians? By *faith*, will every one say. But after what manner are we *saved*? By being *regenerated through the grace given in baptism*."—ST. BASIL, *de Spir. Sanct.* cx.

"Behold, persons are baptized, then all their sins are forgiven, they are *justified from their sins*."—ST. AUGUSTINE, *Serm.* clviii. Rom. viii. 30.

2) Barn. Ep. c. xi. p. 36, 38.

3) Herm. Mand. iv. sec. 4.

allusion to the^{*}blood of ancient sacrifices; the instrumental mean of conveyance, baptism, expressed by the washing of our bodies; and the instrumental mean of reception, expressed by the word faith." The *merits* of Christ, then, applied by the Holy Spirit in *baptism*, and received therein by *faith*, complete our state of justification. One more passage, although many similar ones remain behind, shall close our appeal to the writings of St. Paul. "Such," says he to the Corinthians, "were some of you, but ye *have been washed*," (I translate according to the Greek and by the best authorities,) "but ye have been sanctified, but ye have been justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."¹ By this he would teach, that at the baptism of the Corinthians, in the name of Christ, or the Holy Trinity, they were, through the Spirit of God, set apart and made clean for his service, and thus placed in a justified state before him.

We find, therefore, in the writings of St. Paul, abundant confirmation of the doctrine of St. Peter in his instructions to the multitude—instructions enjoining baptism as necessary to the "remission of sins;" agreeable to what the same Apostle saith in another place—"Even baptism doth also now save us;"² or

1) 1 Cor. vi. 11.

2) 1 Pet. iii. 21.

they are regenerated by the washing of water in the name of the three divine persons, and receive the remission of sins."¹ Irenæus, speaking of this sacrament, calls it "the baptism of regeneration;" and insists, that "every son of Adam needs the laver of regeneration to free him from the transgression in which he was born."² St. Theophilus declares, that "the remission of sins is obtained by water in the laver of regeneration."³ Clement, of Alexandria, a little later, speaking of baptism, says "being baptized, we are illuminated and made sons—that is," says he, among other benefits—"receive grace by which the penalties due to sins are remitted."⁴ Tertullian styles baptism, "the happy sacrament of water, whereby we are washed from the sins of our former blindness, and recovered to eternal life."⁵

I might proceed through the whole noble armory of early martyrs and confessors, and find the same truth set forth thus distinctly, and without dissension. But I forbear, with the single remark, that these men, instructed as many of them were by the Apostles, must have known and taught the Apostolic doctrine.

I now turn to the formularies of our own Church; from which it will appear that our belief is, that re-

1) Just. Mart. Apol. i.
anti Autol.

2) Iren. lib. ii. c. 22.
4) Clem. de Bapt. Orat. xl.

3) Defen. Christ.
5) Ter. de Bapt. c. i.

generation and the forgiveness of ~~sins~~, do not take place, even where repentance and faith exist, till the reception of baptism. That adult candidates for baptism are supposed by the Church to have *repented* and *believed*, is manifest from the language already cited, in which the congregation is exhorted "not to doubt that our Lord in baptism will favorably receive the candidates truly *repenting* and coming unto Him by *faith*." And that the candidates are *not* supposed by the Church to have yet received "remission of sins," notwithstanding their repentance and faith, is equally manifest from the very next words: "That He will grant them (that is, in baptism) remission of their sins and bestow upon them the Holy Ghost;" as also, from the language of the preceding prayer: "We call upon Thee, for these persons, that they, coming to Thy holy baptism, (that is, with repentance and faith,) may receive *remission of their sins by spiritual regeneration*." This would be not only a useless, but impious prayer, if, before baptism, the persons had been pardoned and regenerated. Again in the prayer after the exhortation, we read; "Give Thy Holy Spirit to these persons, that they may be born again, and be made heirs of everlasting salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ." And then, after their baptism, the Church thanks God that "they are now born again, and made heirs of everlasting salvation;" and at their confirma-

tion declares, that God has "regenerated them by water and the Holy Ghost, and forgiven them all their sins." Hence we see why in the **NICENE CREED**—which our **VIIIth ARTICLE** of Religion requires to be "thoroughly received" as "proved by most certain warrants of holy Scripture,"—the Church makes her members acknowledge "one baptism for the remission of sins;"¹ and, in her Catechism, declares, its "inward, spiritual grace" to be "a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness." It is perfectly manifest, therefore, that while the Church insists upon the necessity of faith and repentance to our justification as adults, she at the same time maintains, that we are not justified, or pardoned, or regenerated, as the term may be, till we are *baptized*.

But you may ask how this view can be reconciled with our **XIth ARTICLE** of Religion, which teaches that "all are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by faith,

1) The Council of Nice further declares—"He that is baptized descends indeed obnoxious to sins and held with the corruption of slavery, but he ascends free from that slavery and sins, the son of God, heir, yea, co-heir with Christ, having put on Christ, as it is written, 'If ye be baptized into Christ, ye have put on Christ.'"—**COUN. NICE, de S. Bapt.**

"In the articles of religion, *baptism*," says Bishop Hobart, "is evidently considered as the *mean of our justification*, or being received into a state of favor with God, and also as a mean of receiving the Holy Ghost." See the proof of this assertion, in his *Posthumous Works*, vol. ii. p. 457.

and by faith only, and not for our own works and deservings?" How, as the *first* point, can we be said to be justified, or accounted righteous before God, only for *Christ's merits*, (which exclude our own works,) if *baptism* be necessary to this end? In answer, let me recall to your minds the already cited passage of St. Paul's Epistle to Titus: "Not by works of righteousness which *we have done*, but according to *His mercy* He saved us by *the washing of regeneration*." From this it is clear, that "the washing of regeneration" or baptism, is to be reckoned, not strictly among "our own works of righteousness," but among the provisions of "Christ's mercy:"—not as a thing which we do to save ourselves, but a thing which God graciously appoints, as a mean through which He will, upon certain conditions, extend the benefits of salvation by Christ to our souls. Hence being a mere channel of grace, and receiving all its efficacy from Christ's merits and appointment, it can no more be considered as derogating from these merits as the sole ground of our justification, than the cup can be viewed as taking from the value of a potion through which it is instrumental in conveying life and health to the dying man.¹ Baptism, and the other divinely instituted means of

1) "By baptism," says Hooker, "we receive Christ Jesus, and from Him that saving grace which is proper unto baptism—"The washing of regeneration,' &c."—B. v. c. 57.

grace, stand to Christ's blood as the only meritorious cause of our justification, in the same relation, that the acts required of Israel to fix the blood of the lamb to their doors, stood to that blood as the ground of their deliverance. These acts, it will be admitted, were indispensable, even to the bunch of hyssop for sprinkling, in order to their safety; and yet it was to the blood on the lintel and the two side posts, and to the *blood alone*, that the angel of death looked, in withholding from them the instruments of destruction. So in regard to our salvation, whatever subordinate acts—whether of repentance, faith, or baptism—may be appointed for us in the scheme of redemption by Christ, they belong to that scheme,¹ acquire their value from His merits, and are accepted only as channels opened by Himself to His grace and fellowship. And when, through them, His grace and fellowship come to us, one, and only one sentiment can lawfully

1) It is the want of a clear perception of this truth which leads so many to place *faith* in an attitude of opposition to *good works*—to separate the act by which we are justified through the *righteousness* of Christ, from the acts by which we are endowed with the *spirit* of Christ, “without which we are none of His.” A most remarkable instance of the error complained of, it seems to me, has been lately furnished by Mr. FARRER, in his *Primitive doctrine of Justification Investigated*. If this most elaborate writer had obtained any thing like a just conception of the doctrine of Justification taught by Br. BULL in his *Harmonica Apostolica*, he certainly must have seen that not *one*, among his numerous quotations from the FATHERS, is at variance with it. See further remarks upon this in a subsequent note.

arise in our hearts—"Not unto us, not unto us, but unto Thy name, O Lord, be the praise."

A *second* query, however, arises; How can *baptism* be necessary to our justification, when by the ARTICLE we are said to be justified "*by faith only*?" I answer, (1) that *baptism* is the mean whereby God extends to us pardon in Christ; *faith* the means whereby *we* receive that pardon. On our part faith may be said to be the *only* mean. This, however, does, by no means, exclude God's part, which ordinarily is accomplished in the sacrament of our regeneration. But (2) there is an additional, and even more weighty answer to this objection. That faith through which justification comes, is not a simple belief in the *existence* of its object; neither a simple trust in the *merits* of its object; but it is a trust enlivened and invigorated by the *love* of its object. In better language, it is a "faith which works by love and purifies the heart."¹ For, "though I have all faith so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity or love, it profiteth me nothing."² Justifying faith, then, embraces in its scope other Christian graces. It demands, as the first thing, *repentance*, and this is founded in *humility*. And then, as you have just seen, it must be perfected in love: and love, in the

1) Gal. v. 6. 2) 1 Cor. xiii. 2. See Homily iv. *Of a true and lively Faith*.

Gospel sense, implies fellowship—adoption—incorporation into Christ as “Head over all things unto the Church”—ingrafting into Him, as “the branch is ingrafted into the vine.”¹ And here comes in *baptism*, by which we “put on Christ”²—“are made one body with him.”³ “For by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body.”⁴ The faith, therefore, which according to the *article* is the only medium of our justification, is the faith made lively and strong, (or “lively and *perfect*,” as the Homily saith,) when we are regenerated, or born anew in Christ Jesus “by water and the Holy Ghost.”⁵ Hence in the 27th

1) John xv. 5.

2) Gal. iii. 27.

3) Prayer in the Communion Office.

4) 1 Cor. xii. 13.

5) Mark bears the words of “the judicious Hooker”—“Baptism is a sacrament which God hath instituted in His Church, to the end that they which receive the same might thereby be *incorporated into Christ*, and so through His most precious merit obtain as well that *saving grace of imputation which taketh away all former guiltiness*, as also that *infused divine virtue of the Holy Ghost which giveth to the powers of the soul their first disposition towards future newness of life*.”—B. v. c. 60. This last expression, doubtless, refers to the *new life in the covenant of God*, or *Sanctification*; and hence, the “first disposition” to this life, the life of God’s “peculiar people,” must be generated, he means, *under the grace of the covenant itself*. The expression is explained by another on the next page: “As we are not naturally men without birth, so neither are we Christian men but by *new birth*, nor, according to the manifest ordinary course of divine dispensation, *new-born*, but by that baptism which both declareth and maketh us Christians. In which respect we justly hold it to be the *door of our actual entrance* into God’s house, the *first apparent beginning of life*, a seal perhaps to the grace of election, but to our *sanctification* here, a step that hath not any before it.”—B. v. c. 60, vol. ii. p. 341.

your faith—without baptism? Aye, in that case, would you hesitate for an instant to make the most earnest and speedy preparation for receiving that holy sacrament?

Let us proceed in the argument. At the time when St. Paul exclaimed, “Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?”¹ he is admitted by all to have been a converted man, and hence, in some degree, a believer. But was he *justified*? Were his sins forgiven, or washed away? Hear the language which, three days after, Ananias, who was sent by God to give him instruction, addressed to him—“Arise, *be baptized, and wash away thy sins.*”² What can be clearer than the fact, that the sins of St. Paul remained upon him, notwithstanding his wonderful conversion, till he was cleansed in holy baptism? Has another way been opened for the application of Christ’s blood to the cleansing of our souls?

Now listen to the testimony of this same Apostle—“Know ye not, that so many as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized *into his death*?” that is, made partakers of the benefits—*justification* being one—of his sacrifice on the cross? To the end, that being thus “buried with him by baptism into death,”³ it might be to us “a death unto sin,” fol-

1) Acts ix. 6.

2) Ib. xxii. 16.

3) Rom. vi. 2.

lowed by "a new birth unto righteousness."¹ Again, "Ye are all the children of God *by faith in Jesus Christ*. For as many of you as have been *baptized* into Christ, have *put on Christ*."² Now being made "the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ," certainly implies being in "a justified state;" but thus being made "the children of God by faith," is the same, according to these words of St. Paul, as "putting on Christ by baptism." Hence, is not the putting on Christ by baptism, the being placed into "a justified state?" Again, "Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it, *with the washing of water by the word*;"³ or as St. Chrysostom says, "by the words used in the form of baptism." Now what can this sanctifying and cleansing the members of Christ's body, the Church, with the washing of water by the word, mean, if not their purification, or forgiveness of sin, by baptism "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost?"⁴ Again, the Apostle represents the believers at Colosse, as having "put off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ," or by holy baptism; as is clear from his very next words: "Buried with Him by *baptism*, wherein also

1) Church Catechism. See Bp. Reveridge's explanation of this answer.

2) Gal. iii. 27.

3) Eph. v. 25, 26.

4) Matt. xxviii. 19.

ents, and it becomes an imperfect medium for the eye of the soul, "in looking unto Jesus."

Here, then, in this perfect, Gospel union, in order to our salvation, of spiritual graces—of outward means and inward influences—we have a sufficient guard, on the one hand, against formal self-righteousness, and on the other, against Antinomian fanaticism. Our part is clear:—"What God hath joined together, we must not" attempt to "put asunder."¹ And as He hath joined together "the outward visible sign and the inward spiritual grace"²—joined together, also, repentance, faith, and baptism, it behooves us to beware how we separate them. Neither repentance, faith, nor baptism avails aught in itself. Repentance must prostrate the soul in a spirit of self-loathing before the Cross of Christ. Faith must lead it in holy love to repose for salvation upon the all-sufficient merits of the Cross; while Baptism must bind it to that Cross in the closest ties of fellowship

1) Matt. xix. 6.

2) "That we may be born of the Spirit," says Bishop Beveridge, "we must be born also of water. Not as if there was any such virtue in water, whereby it could regenerate us, but because this is the rite or ordinance appointed by Christ, wherein to regenerate us by His *Holy Spirit*. And seeing this is instituted by Christ Himself, as we cannot be born of water without the Spirit, neither can we, in any ordinary way, be born of the Spirit without water, used or applied in obedience and conformity to His institution. *Christ hath joined them together, and it is not in our power to part them.* He that would be born of the Spirit must be born of the water too."—*Serm. xxxv.*

with Him who shed upon it His precious blood. All these must unite, however, in truly bringing us to Christ; while nothing is availing to our justification which results not in this—which “creates us” not “anew in Christ Jesus unto good works”—“makes us” not “partakers of the divine nature.”² The mark, beloved, is indeed high; but we reach it, thanks to God, step by step;—“first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear.” We must, however, “sow to the Spirit,” and cultivate in the Spirit, or we shall never “reap life everlasting.”³

But are there not some before me who as yet have “sown only to the flesh?” who have not taken the first step towards a provision for an eternal, a spiritual, a holy existence? who are living from day to day, as if days on earth would never end—squandering day after day, as if there were no day of judgment—no heaven, no hell? What mean ye, creatures of an hour, by trifling thus with the solemn concerns of a soul that cannot die—of an eternity that has no end? What mean ye, dependents upon God’s forbearance, while basking in the sunshine of His present favor, and hoping for the light of His everlasting love, thus to walk abroad under the awful eye of His omniscience, trampling upon His commands, and covered

1) Eph. ii. 10.

2) 2 Pet. i. 4.

3) Gal. vi. 8.

with unrepented sins, as if sin was not "the which His soul hateth?"¹ What mean ye, worry the dust—whose lives are a vapor, whose days shadow that departeth—thus to exalt yourselves against the Judge of all the earth, as if ye "had made a covenant with death, an agreement with hell?"² O, do the lessons of experience teach you? What the occurrences of almost every day teach you? What does God's word teach you? Aye, what does science teach you?—That you are safe? That to run no awful hazard? That the way of transgression is not hard?³ That they do not stand on slippery places?⁴ O, remember, I tell you to-day, and you under authority of Almighty God, *that* repent according to the hope of the Gospel, comes too which shuts out baptism, and living faith on the word of God!

1) Ps. ii. 5. Is. i. 14.

3) Prov. xiii. 15.

2) Is. xxviii. 15-18.

4) Ps. lxxiii. 18.



SERMON III.

**CTIONS TO BAPTISM, AS A CONDITION AND MEANS OF
JUSTIFICATION, ANSWERED.**





III.

OBJECTIONS TO BAPTISM, AS A CONDITION AND MEANS OF JUSTIFICATION, ANSWERED.

Acts ii. 38, 39.—Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins for the promise is unto you, and to your children.

AN examination of the false theories of astronomy, prior to the present Copernican system, will show that their errors are to be ascribed mainly to hasty conclusions from partial and disconnected observations; observations restricted to a portion of the heavenly bodies, instead of being extended to all with their mutual influences and dependences. Thus has it been in regard to the Christian religion. Men have fixed their view so intently upon some particular feature in this religion, become so absorbed in their observations upon it, as to form in their minds an exaggerated estimate of its value in relation to the other and equally important

and by faith only, and not for our own works and deservings?" How, as the *first* point, can we be said to be justified, or accounted righteous before God, only for *Christ's merits*, (which exclude our own works,) if *baptism* be necessary to this end? In answer, let me recall to your minds the already cited passage of St. Paul's Epistle to Titus: "Not by works of righteousness which *we have done*, but according to *His mercy* He saved us by *the washing of regeneration*." From this it is clear, that "the washing of regeneration" or baptism, is to be reckoned, not strictly among "our own works of righteousness," but among the provisions of "Christ's mercy:"—not as a thing which we do to save ourselves, but a thing which God graciously appoints, as a mean through which He will, upon certain conditions, extend the benefits of salvation by Christ to our souls. Hence being a mere channel of grace, and receiving all its efficacy from Christ's merits and appointment, it can no more be considered as derogating from these merits as the sole ground of our justification, than the cup can be viewed as taking from the value of a potion through which it is instrumental in conveying life and health to the dying man.¹ Baptism, and the other divinely instituted means of

1) "By baptism," says Hooker, "we receive Christ Jesus, and from Him that saving grace which is proper unto baptism—'The washing of regeneration,' &c."—B. v. c. 57.

grace, stand to Christ's blood as the only meritorious cause of our justification, in the same relation, that the acts required of Israel to fix the blood of the lamb to their doors, stood to that blood as the ground of their deliverance. These acts, it will be admitted, were indispensable, even to the bunch of hyssop for sprinkling, in order to their safety; and yet it was to the blood on the lintel and the two side posts, and to the *blood alone*, that the angel of death looked, in withholding from them the instruments of destruction. So in regard to our salvation, whatever subordinate acts—whether of repentance, faith, or baptism—may be appointed for us in the scheme of redemption by Christ, they belong to that scheme,¹ acquire their value from His merits, and are accepted only as channels opened by Himself to His grace and fellowship. And when, through them, His grace and fellowship come to us, one, and only one sentiment can lawfully

1) It is the want of a clear perception of this truth which leads so many to place faith in an attitude of opposition to good works—to separate the act by which we are justified through the *righteousness* of Christ, from the acts by which we are endowed with the *spirit* of Christ, “without which we are none of His.” A most remarkable instance of the error complained of, it seems to me, has been lately furnished by MR. FARRER, in his *Primitive doctrine of Justification Investigated*. If this most elaborate writer had obtained any thing like a just conception of the doctrine of Justification taught by BR. BULL in his *Harmonica Apostolica*, he certainly must have seen that not one, among his numerous quotations from the FATHERS, is at variance with it. See further remarks upon this in a subsequent note.

arise in our hearts—"Not unto us, not unto us, but unto Thy name, O Lord, be the praise."

A *second* query, however, arises; How can *baptism* be necessary to our justification, when by the ARTICLE we are said to be justified "*by faith only*?" I answer, (1) that *baptism* is the mean whereby God extends to us pardon in Christ; *faith* the means whereby *we* receive that pardon. On our part faith may be said to be the *only* mean. This, however, does, by no means, exclude God's part, which ordinarily is accomplished in the sacrament of our regeneration. But (2) there is an additional, and even more weighty answer to this objection. That faith through which justification comes, is not a simple belief in the *existence* of its object; neither a simple trust in the *merits* of its object; but it is a trust enlivened and invigorated by the *love* of its object. In better language, it is a "faith which works by love and purifies the heart."¹ For, "though I have all faith so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity or love, it profiteth me nothing."² Justifying faith, then, embraces in its scope other Christian graces. It demands, as the first thing, *repentance*, and this is founded in *humility*. And then, as you have just seen, it must be perfected in love: and love, in the

1) Gal. v. 6. 2) 1 Cor. xiii. 2. See Homily iv. *Of a true and lively Faith*.

Gospel sense, implies fellowship—adoption—incorporation into Christ as “Head over all things unto the Church”—ingrafting into Him, as “the branch is ingrafted into the vine.”¹ And here comes in *baptism*, by which we “put on Christ”²—“are made one body with him.”³ “For by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body.”⁴ The faith, therefore, which according to the *article* is the only medium of our justification, is the faith made lively and strong, (or “lively and *perfect*,” as the Homily saith,) when we are regenerated, or born anew in Christ Jesus “by water and the Holy Ghost.”⁵ Hence in the 27th

1) John xv. 5.

2) Gal. iii. 27.

3) Prayer in the Communion Office.

4) 1 Cor. xii. 13.

5) Mark here the words of “the judicious Hooker”—“Baptism is a sacrament which God hath instituted in His Church, to the end that they which receive the same might thereby be *incorporated into Christ*, and so through His most precious merit obtain as well that *saving grace of imputation which taketh away all former guiltiness*, as also that *infused divine virtue of the Holy Ghost which giveth to the powers of the soul their first disposition towards future newness of life*.”—B. v. c. 60. This last expression, doubtless, refers to the *new life in the covenant of God*, or *Sanctification*; and hence, the “first disposition” to this life, the life of God’s “peculiar people,” must be generated, he means, *under the grace of the covenant itself*. The expression is explained by another on the next page: “As we are not naturally men without birth, so neither are we Christian men but by *new birth*, nor, according to the manifest ordinary course of divine dispensation, *new-born*, but by that baptism which both declareth and maketh us Christians. In which respect we justly hold it to be the *door of our actual entrance* into God’s house, the *first apparent beginning of life*, a seal perhaps to the grace of election, but to our *sanctification* here, a step that hath not any before it.”—B. v. c. 60, vol. ii. p. 341.

verse of the 3d chapter of Galatians, already cited, the "faith in Jesus Christ," by which we are made "the children of God," is represented as the result of, or as being coincident with, our "putting on Christ by baptism." And also, in the passage referred to in 2d chap. of Colossians—our resurrection from sin through "the *faith* of the operation of God," is made to take place when we were "buried with Christ in baptism." Hence, too, Article XXVth declares that this sacrament "strengthens and *confirms* our faith in Christ." For which cause, doubtless, St. Augustine calls baptism "the sacrament of faith:" while the office for the baptism of adults makes the expression—"by baptism put on Christ"—equivalent to the words—"being made the children of God by *faith* in Jesus Christ;" the latter embracing the former, and being made available by it, so as to be the chief, and in one sense, as I have shown, the *only* means of our union with Christ, or our justification before God through His all-prevailing merits. When St. Paul, therefore, gives to the inquiry of the Jailer—"What must I do to be saved?"—the answer—"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved"—he means precisely what St. Peter meant in the text—"Repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." The faith required by one Apostle being made complete to our

justification, in the way—"baptism in the name of Jesus Christ"—pointed out by the other. When, too, our Saviour says, St. John iii. 16, "Whosoever *believeth* in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life," He means just the same as He does when He declares, St. Mark xvi. 16, "He that *believeth and is baptized* shall be saved." Gospel faith, then, in its justifying state, is something more than a mere trust in the atonement of Christ for salvation. It is a faith based upon humility, nurtured by repentance, animated by love, and crowned by the spirit of adoption and holy fellowship with Christ.¹ Yea, in this state of completeness, it is like the pure light of heaven, whose commingled rays alone can produce whiteness and clearness.² Let any of these rays be thrown off by the prism, and confusion and obscurity at once ensue. So let prejudice or disobedience deprive this faith of any one of its evangelical constitu-

1) This view, as Bishop Bull has shown, alone can reconcile the apparent contradiction between St. Paul and St. James, while it is necessary to the proper understanding of many expressions in the early Fathers of the Church.

2) "These are they that have *washed* their robes and made them *white* in the *blood of the Lamb*." Rev. vii. 14. A passage which seems to me to comprehend in a few striking words the fountain of our redemption—"The blood of the Lamb"—the means through which we ordinarily come to it by Faith—"the washing" in baptism "of our robes,"—and the result, our holiness, expressed by their "whiteness."

with unrepented sins, as if sin was not "the thing which His soul hateth?"¹ What mean ye, worms of the dust—whose lives are a vapor, whose days a shadow that departeth—thus to exalt yourselves against the Judge of all the earth, as if ye "had made a covenant with death, an agreement with hell?"² O, what do the lessons of experience teach you? What do the occurrences of almost every day teach you? What does God's word teach you? Aye, what does conscience teach you?—That you are safe? That you run no awful hazard? That the way of transgressors is not hard?³ That they do not stand on slippery places?⁴ O, remember, I tell you to-day, and I tell you under authority of Almighty God, *that* repentance, according to the hope of the Gospel, comes too late, which shuts out baptism, and living faith on the Son of God!

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SERMON III.

**OBJECTIONS TO BAPTISM, AS A CONDITION AND MEANS OF
JUSTIFICATION, ANSWERED.**





III.

OBJECTIONS TO BAPTISM, AS A CONDITION AND MEANS OF JUSTIFICATION, ANSWERED.

ACTS II. 38, 39.—Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins the promise is unto you, and to your children.

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parts. One has confined his attention mainly to repentance, another to faith, another to love, another to baptism. The result has necessarily been a distortion, or partial exhibition of revealed truth; while our branch of the Catholic Church, under God's good providence, has, as was shown you in my last discourse, so balanced one truth by another as to give to each its due value, and thus preserve, in just equilibrium, the whole—blending all truth, so far as the awful nature of revelation will admit, in one harmonious system.

A fundamental part of this system, you were there taught, is contained in the instructions of St. Peter in the text; that repentance, faith, and baptism, are required of adults by these instructions, “for the remission of sins;” not as meritorious or efficacious in themselves; but as giving, by God's appointment, an interest in the merits of Christ, which are the only meritorious, the only procuring cause of our justification in God's sight. You were taught, also, how repentance prepares the soul for faith; and how faith, weak and ineffectual at first, is “strengthened and confirmed in holy baptism;”¹ made to “work by love,” thus becoming available as the mean of our saving interest in the righteousness and death of

1) Art. XXV.

Christ; and how this view alone reconciles different and apparently conflicting portions of Holy Writ, and of the hallowed Liturgy of the Church.

My design now, by God's grace, is to answer some of the objections commonly urged against our view of baptism; as regards the sacrament generally, and in its application to infant children.

I. 1. As regards baptism generally, it is objected, that instances are recorded in the New Testament, where sins are forgiven manifestly without baptism; as in the case of the thief on the cross. In that case, it is said, our Lord promised to a dying man, who obviously could not have received baptism, admission to His kingdom upon the simple exercise of repentance and faith.

I grant the facts here claimed; but must insist upon them as showing the case not to be in point. (1.) The divine Saviour, who had "all power given Him in heaven and earth," was Himself present, and of course had a right to dispense His mercy according to His good pleasure. He did dispense it to the dying thief, and probably without baptism. But did that same divine Saviour, in commissioning His disciples to bear His blessed Gospel to a perishing world, instruct them to offer salvation upon the terms on which it was granted to the thief? This is the question for you and me; not what God accepted of him

before the evangelical system was established; but what He demands of us by the terms of that system. And when we hear Him command His ministers to "go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature," and hear Him proclaim that, "he," among the whole world—every creature—"that believeth and is *baptized* shall be saved,"¹ we can hardly doubt what the will of the Lord our God is in regard to *ourselves*;—ourselves, with the Gospel in our hands, and the means of obeying it. But (2,) the thief on the cross was without these means. He lived before they had been provided; and he heard for the first time the words of eternal life, never having enjoyed the opportunity which we enjoy of Christian baptism. The heathen are in a similar condition. So may be many others. And when any of you can plead before God the spiritual destitution of the thief, you may then look for the indulgence he experienced. Baptism is necessary to salvation—not because of any intrinsic virtue in the sacrament—but because it is the appointment or institution of God for the attainment of His grace and fellowship. And, therefore, any of our race not in circumstances, through His providence, to comply with it, are exempt, by His own law, from its obligations.²

1) Mark xvi. 15, 16.

2) "We grant that those sentences of Holy Scripture which make sacra-

2. Again ;—by way of objection to the necessity of baptism to our justification, it is asked, how this idea can be reconciled with the language of St. Paul, in which he thanks God, that he had baptized only a few of the Corinthians, and that he “was not sent to baptize, but to preach the Gospel?”¹ I know I might set aside this objection with the single remark, that it cannot be rightly made, after what has been proved to be the will of God on this point from the writings of St. Paul himself. But lest there should be some minds too unsubdued to be satisfied with such an answer, I reply (1) that the ground of St. Paul’s thankfulness was not that the Corinthians *had not been baptized*, but that *he* had not baptized them ; lest, in the contentions, then prevailing among them, “any should say that he had baptized in *his own name*.”² For that they had been baptized is clear from his previous words : “Was Paul crucified for you ? *Were ye baptized* in the name of Paul ?”³ Equivalent to his saying, “Ye talk of being *my* disciples ; but were ye baptized in my name ? Were ye not rather baptized in the name of Christ ? Lest, from having received baptism at *my* hands, ye should affirm that ye were

ments most necessary to eternal life are no prejudice to their salvation that want them by some inevitable necessity and without any fault of their own.”

—Hooker, *Ecel. Pol.* b. v. c. 60.

1) 1 Cor. i. 16.

2) Ib. i. 15.

3) Ib. i. 13.

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not ;—I thank God, that I baptized only a small number of you ; but that generally ye were baptized by ministers of a lower grade, who were with me.”¹ And then (2) as to his assertion that he “ was not sent to baptize but to preach the Gospel,” I would remark that it cannot be understood strictly, as his commission certainly embraced besides “ preaching,” “ the care of all the churches.”² Hence the most we can infer from this assertion is, that the main object of *his* mission was to “ preach the Gospel”—in which was embraced the discharge of those high Episcopal functions necessary to the proper efficacy of the Gospel—while the duty of baptizing was committed by him, chiefly, to a lower order of the ministry. But this assertion, so far from implying a low estimate, in the mind of the Apostle, of holy baptism, actually evinces, when taken in connection with his practice on several occasions, a high idea of its necessity. For just in proportion as “ preaching” was his *peculiar* duty, must have been the strength of the necessity, that could induce him, as in various cases, to leave this duty in order to administer baptism.

Instead, therefore, of being considered an objection to baptism, this circumstance ought to operate on our

1) It will be seen that Silas and Timothy were with him, by reference to Acts xviii. 5.

2) 2 Cor. xi. 28.

minds as an incentive to the duty. That is, that while St. Paul was intrusted, especially, with "the preaching of the word," his views of the necessity of baptism were so high, that he never suffered, so far as we can learn, one of his converts to leave him without receiving that sacrament, either by his own hands, or by the hands of some subordinate minister. Turn over the pages of the Acts of the Apostles, and if you have before doubted of the importance in St. Paul's mind, of holy baptism, your doubts will vanish. For, you will not only find, that it was administered at once to all his converts, but that it was sometimes administered under circumstances declarative of its deep and urgent necessity;—as in the case of the jailer. This man, as you know, was converted by witnessing the miraculous deliverance of Paul and Silas from the inner prison at Philippi. And although it was in the dead of night, ("midnight," as the record says,) he and his household were baptized.¹ It cannot be said, that their baptism took place at this extraordinary hour for want of a more fitting time; as the Apostle had determined to remain during a part of the next day. But the conclusion must be, that it was administered *then*, because then was "the accepted time," and the stake was too awful for delay.

1) Acts xvi. 33.

3. But it is *further* objected, that "the preaching of CHRIST," seemed to be the grand object of the Apostolic ministry;—that St. Paul determined to know nothing among the Corinthians, "*save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.*" We admit the truth of this fact in its utmost force; but submit the question whether "preaching Christ" did not embrace the necessity of "being *baptized into Christ?*" Mark the effect of the first teaching of the Apostles. Take the sermon of St. Peter on the day of Pentecost. Three thousand of his hearers, "*gladly receiving his words,*" were *baptized*. Take the case of the Eunuch; a man profoundly ignorant of the Gospel, till Philip, the deacon, joined him in his chariot; so ignorant as not to understand the meaning of that beautiful and affecting prophecy of Christ's sufferings, in the 53d chapter of Isaiah. And Philip "*preached unto him Jesus.*" This is the language of the inspired record—"preached unto him *Jesus.*" And what was the effect of this preaching? Was it to convince the Eunuch that "repentance and faith" alone were needful? Was it to show to the world that "the preaching of Jesus" did not, in the mind of the deacon, embrace "the doctrine of baptism?" "As they came to a certain water"—while Philip was still "preaching *Jesus*"—"the Eunuch said, See, here is water, what doth hinder me *to be baptized?*" We

see, then, that the faithful preaching of "Christ crucified," in Gospel times, produced in the minds of the converts an earnest desire to receive, as the very first thing, the blessings conveyed by the Spirit of God through this holy sacrament. And we see, too, the unscriptural and dangerous character of that preaching, which now-a-days not only fails to produce this effect, but actually creates prejudices against the necessity and spiritual efficacy of baptism—a sacrament which, we have shown, God has connected with "the remission of our sins,"¹ and made indispensable to our entrance into the kingdom of heaven.²

4. But the additional objection is urged, that this view of baptism gives to religion too much the character of *form*. In answer, let me say:—If our view of baptism be, as I have proved, the *Gospel* view, then the charge of formality must not be made against us, but against the Divine Author of the Gospel. Suppose that our religion be *all* form; if it be the religion of God, I see not how, without awful presumption, we can object to it, or decline to embrace it. But I have shown that it has not only "a form," but also "a power;" and so long as we do not "deny the power,"³ do not cling to "the outward visible sign" of baptism, while we reject the inward spiritual

1) Acts ii. 38.

2) John iii. 5.

3) 2 Tim. iii. 5.

grace," we certainly cannot be charged with advocating "a religion of mere *form*." Our blessed Lord, let it be remembered, on the very occasion of His rebuke to the Pharisees for their *formality* or their want of the true *spirit* of prayer, appointed a *form* of prayer for His disciples, in which they might "worship in *spirit* and in truth."¹ No *social* religion, however *spiritual*, can *exist* without a form. The simple question for us is, Is our "form" of God's appointment; and do we use it to give increase and energy to the divine spirit within us? This is the question for every one; not only for the Churchman, but for the Methodist and the "revival man." He has to inquire whether *his* form—"the anxious seat," or any other adopted means of awakening sinners—is appointed by God; and whether a person may not be a mere formalist *there*, as well as at holy *baptism*. And besides, let him inquire who, at baptism, is likely to be most formal—he who denies to this sacrament its "inward, spiritual grace," and thus comes to it as a mere form; *or* he who, through "the outward, visible sign," looks for the "inward, spiritual grace," "a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness."

5. But it is urged, finally, that this doctrine of

1) Matt. vi. 9. John iv. 23.

baptism was opposed by the Reformers as a corrupt doctrine of Popery. Nothing, it seems to me, but palpable ignorance of the views of the Reformers can shield this objection from heinous guilt. What! the Reformers teach the remission of sins, or regeneration, or salvation, without baptism! Hearken, my beloved brethren, I repeat the words of John Calvin: "God, by *regenerating* us in baptism, ingrafts us into the society of His Church, and makes us *His* by adoption." And again: "Beyond the bosom of the Church," into which we are thus ingrafted by baptism, "no remission of sins is to be hoped for, nor any salvation." Hearken, I repeat the words of Martin Luther:—"Beyond the Church," into which he maintains we are introduced by baptism, "there is no place for the Gospel—no remission of sins—no sanctification."¹ Again, I repeat the words of the Augsburg Confession of Faith, drawn up by Luther and Melancthon—"Baptism is necessary to salvation, because by it the grace of God is offered."² Also the words of the Helvetic Confession, containing the doctrines of Geneva: "To be baptized in the name of Christ, is to be received into covenant with God, into the heirship of His children; to be *purged*

1) Cal. Inst. iv. 1. (4.) Calvin and other dissenting authorities are referred to, it will be observed, *merely as witnessing* to a historical fact.

2) Luth. Cat.

3) Syllog. Confess. p. 196.

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*from the defilements of sin, and endowed with God's grace to live new and holy lives."*¹ Also the words of the Synod of Dort: "Out of the Church into which we are received by baptism, there is *no salvation*." Again—"The sacraments are visible signs and seals of an inward and invisible thing; by *means whereof* God worketh in us by the power of the Holy Ghost. The ministers on their part administer the sacrament—that which is visible; but our Lord giveth that which is signified by the sacrament, viz., the gifts and invisible grace; washing, cleansing, and purging our souls from all filth and unrighteousness—renewing our hearts and filling them with all comfort; giving us a true assurance of His fatherly goodness—putting on us the new man, and putting off the old man with all his deeds. Therefore we believe that every man who is earnestly studious of eternal life, ought to be but once baptized with this only baptism without ever repeating the same, since we *cannot be born twice*."² Also the words of the Scottish Confession:—"Beyond the Church, into which we are baptized, there is *no spiritual life*—no eternal happiness." Also the words of the Westminster Confession:—"The Church is the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ," "into which we are initiated

1) Syllog. Confess. De S. Bap. p. 80.

2) Syllog. Confess.

by baptism," "and out of which there is *no ordinary possibility of salvation.*"¹ Now let us turn to the Catholic Reformers in England. Hear the words of Archbishop Cranmer, with five associates, in the time of Edward VI.—"Salvation is withheld from those who turn from the sacred laver of baptism." Again, the Archbishop, in his Catechism, sets forth the benefits of baptism in this language—"The *first* is, that in baptism, *our sins be forgiven us.* The *second* is, that the *Holy Ghost is given us*, the which doth spread abroad the love of God in our hearts, whereby we may keep God's commandments. And the *third* is, that *the righteousness of Christ is given us*, that we may claim the same as our own." Hear the good Bishop Jewell :—"They that be washed in the waters of baptism, *receive the remission of sins*—their robes are made clean in the blood of the Lamb. The water itself is nothing ; but by the working of God's

1) See, too, the words of the Presbyterian *Catechism*, agreeing with the Presbyterian Confession—"Baptism is a sacrament of the New Testament wherein Christ hath ordained the washing of water, to be a sign and seal of ingrafting into Him, of *remission of sins* by His blood, and *regeneration by His Spirit*, of adoption and resurrection to eternal life." And "by a right use of this ordinance," says this Confession, "the grace promised is not only offered, but *really exhibited and conferred* by the Holy Ghost." So that Presbyterian parents are exhorted to bring their baptized children, if they have lived according to the vows of baptism, to the *Lord's Supper* ; no further change being required by the Confession to fit them for that Holy Sacrament.

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Spirit, *the death and merits of our Saviour are thereby assured unto us, and we are saved.*"¹ Hear him whom the whole Church styles the *judicious* Hooker: "Baptism is a sacrament which God hath instituted in His Church, to the end that they which receive the same, might thereby be *incorporated into Christ*, and through *His most precious merits* obtain the *saving grace of imputation* which *taketh away all former guiltiness.*" And again:—"Had Christ only declared His *will* to have all men baptized, and not acquainted us with any cause why baptism is *necessary*, our ignorance in the reason of that he enjoineth might perhaps have hindered somewhat the forwardness of our obedience thereunto; whereas *now being taught that baptism is necessary to take away sin*, how have we the fear of God in our hearts, if care of *delivering men's souls from sin* do not move us to *use all means for their baptism?*"² Hear Bishop Bramhall, a giant against Romanism:—"We believe, that without baptismal grace, that is, *regeneration*, no man can enter into the kingdom of God." And again:—"We acknowledge a wilful neglect of baptism to be a damnable sin; and without repentance and God's *extraordinary* mercy, to exclude a man from all hope

1) Treas. on Sac. p. 266.

2) Hooker, b. v. c. 60. (4.)

of salvation."¹ Hear Dr. Barrow, of a later period, but testifying to the Catholic teaching on this subject:—"It hath been the doctrine constantly, and with very general consent, delivered in the Catholic Church, that all persons by the holy mystery of baptism duly initiated or admitted into the communion of Christ's body, the grace of God's Holy Spirit is certainly bestowed, enabling them to perform the conditions of piety and virtue then undertaken by them; enlightening their minds, rectifying their wills, purifying their affections, directing and assisting them in their practice; *the which holy gift* (if not abased, ill-treated, driven away, or quenched by their ill behavior,) will perpetually be continued, improved, and increased to them."² I close this testimony, by

1) Bram. on Dying without Bapt., Works, p. 979.

2) Sermon xlv. vol. iiii. p. 370. And in his treatise on baptism, he enumerates its benefits thus—" (1.) The purgation or absolution of us from the guilt of past offences, by a free and full remission of them, (the which, washing by water, cleansing from all stains, doth most appositely represent,) and consequently God's being reconciled unto us, His receiving us into a state of grace and favor, His *freely justifying us—that these privileges are conferred in baptism*, many places of Scripture plainly show, and the *primitive Church*, with most *firm* and *unanimous* consent, did believe. (2.) In baptism the gift of God's Holy Spirit is conferred, qualifying us for the state into which we then come, and enabling us to perform the duties we then undertake. (3.) With those *gifts* is connected the benefit of *regeneration*, implying our entrance into a new state and course of life. (4.) With these benefits is conjoined that of being inserted into God's Church, his family, the number of his chosen people, the mystical body of Christ, whereby we become entitled to the privileges and immunities of that heavenly corpora-

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appealing to a later, but no less able divine, the pious Bishop Beveridge. "This I would desire," says he, "all here present to take special notice of, that you may not be deceived by a sort of people risen up among us, who, being led as they pretend, by the light within them, are fallen into such horrid darkness, that they affirm, in flat contradiction to our Saviour's words, that they may be saved without baptism. I pray God to open their eyes that they may not go blindfold into eternal damnation. And I advise you all, as you value your eternal salvation, take heed that ye never be seduced by them under any pretence whatever ; but rather do what you can to turn them from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto God, that they may obtain forgiveness of their sins, and inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith in Him, who saith, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."¹ To the solemn exposition of the good Bishop, I venture to add my own—beseeching you for Christ's sake, and for your own souls' sake, not to suffer yourselves, at this period of proud and reckless self-sufficiency, to be drawn aside

tion. (5.) In consequence of these things, there is with baptism conferred a capacity of a title unto, an assurance (under condition of persevering in faith and obedience to our Lord) of eternal life and salvation."

1) Sermon. XXXV

from the commanded institution of God. Baptism, by His plain word, is made necessary to the remission of your sins, the regeneration of your natures, the salvation of your souls; and remember, *that* is the word by which you are to be judged at the last day.

II. We proceed, secondly, to consider the objections to baptism in its application to infants.

In respect to adults exercising repentance and faith, you may, perhaps, admit the doctrine of *baptismal regeneration*; but, as it regards infants incapable of these graces, you doubt its application, and object to its being taught. Let us examine this point; and may the Spirit of the living God be our guide to the truth.

You profess to be Churchmen; and would doubtless regard any suspicion of your want of affection to the Church, as a reproach to your Christian character. Let us see, then, what your Church teaches, and what you are bound and profess to hold. Open your Prayer Books at the Office for the Public Baptism of Infants. The Church first addresses you, and calls upon you to pray that the child presented “may be baptized with water and the Holy Ghost;” and then puts into your mouth these words:—“We call upon Thee for this infant, that he, *coming to Thy holy baptism*, may receive remission of sins by spirit-

ual regeneration." And again, "Give Thy Holy Spirit to this infant that he *may be born again*, and be made an heir of everlasting salvation, through our Lord Jesus Christ." And then, immediately after the baptism, she solemnly affirms that "the child *is regenerate*," and bids you give thanks to Almighty God for the same, in those expressive words:—"We yield Thee hearty thanks, Most Merciful Father, that it *hath* pleased Thee *to regenerate this infant with Thy Holy Spirit*, to receive him for Thine own child by adoption, and to incorporate him into Thy holy Church." After which the Church teaches, in her Catechism, every infant thus baptized to *say*, that he is "a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of Heaven," and that he hath undergone "a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness," and been made "a child of grace;" and "to thank God that He hath thus called him into a state of salvation through Jesus Christ, and to pray unto Him that he *may continue in this state unto his life's end.*" Now let me ask you, as honest men, whether more than one meaning can fairly be obtained from this language? and whether that meaning be not, that at the baptism of an infant, he is actually "*regenerated by water and the Holy Ghost, and receives the remission of sins by spiritual regeneration?*"—Or, as some say, does the Church mean, when she *positively af-*

firms before God, that "the child is regenerate," that she only charitably *hopes* he ~~is~~? or, as others say, hopes he *will be*? Of what fearful presumption, then, must she be guilty, in daring to "return *heartily thanks* to Almighty God," that it "*hath* pleased Him to *regenerate* the infant with His Holy Spirit," when, in fact, she only *hopes* it hath pleased Him, or *will* please him to do it? O, is not this a species of trifling too awful for beings destined to be justified or condemned by *their words*?

But is this doctrine of infant baptismal regeneration opposed to the Oracles of God? We have seen already that with baptism is linked *remission of sins, and regeneration*. But this, you say, is in the case of adults, having repentance and faith. True; but what in their case rendered these conditions necessary? Was it not that adults had committed actual sin in unbelief; and thus created moral impediments to the fellowship of Christ, which repentance and faith alone could remove? But do any such impediments exist with respect to infant children? It is true, they are cursed with "*original* or *birth sin*;" but does this require repentance? True, they are born with natures, which, without regeneration, would lead to unbelief; but is this a reason why they should *not*, by baptism, *be regenerated*? Repentance and faith are required not as arbitrary conditions, but as *means to*

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an end; as things necessary to bring us into a *proper state* for baptism. Now, if any portion of our race can be shown to be in this state without these things, to that portion, surely, they cannot be supposed necessary. But are not infants in such a state? At least, does any unfitness for Christ's fellowship attach to them, which can be remedied by repentance and faith? Have they committed sin? Have they resisted Christ by unbelief, so as to unfit them for His kingdom? Listen to Christ's emphatic own words:—"Except ye be converted, and become *as little children*, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." And again, "Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for *of such* is the Kingdom of God. Verily, I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God *as a little child*, he shall in no wise enter therein;" words which teach as plainly as words can teach, that little children are in the very fittest state for admission into fellowship with Him in His Kingdom; a state to which adult persons must be brought by repentance and faith, in order to enjoy that fellowship. Infant children do not *need*, and hence are not required to *comply* with these conditions at their initiation into the Church by baptism. But in after life, they will need, and must comply with them. Hence they are obliged to "promise them both by their sureties; which promise, when

they come to age, themselves are bound to perform.”¹ And this suretiship is according to the precedents of Holy Scripture. Children, under the Jewish economy, were admitted, by circumcision, to all the benefits of God’s Kingdom, on the promise of parents, or sponsors. What, under the Christian scheme, should deprive them of the like benefits, on the same terms? If the system of the Jews, exclusive in its spirit and restricted in its advantages, could nevertheless provide for the spiritual wants of its little ones, upon what ground can it be said, that the Gospel—so much more benevolent, and free, and full in its provisions and offers—expressing through its divine Author a special sympathy for the poor, and helpless, and young—withholds from infant children that blessing not denied under the law?²

Besides this *fitness* of young children for holy baptism, and their presumptive claim to it, they have clearly a Scripture pledge of its benefits to their souls. In the text the promise of pardon and grace to baptized believers was to them and “to their children.” And the language addressed by St. Paul to the jailer,

1) Church Catechism.

2) In reference to this point, and, indeed, the entire subject of infant baptism, let the reader consult the admirable discourses of the late BISHOP SEABURY, vol. i. Dis. iv. and v. And also a tract from WALL, *On Infant Baptism*.

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at the baptism of himself and household—"and thou shalt be saved and thy *house*"—implies surely that the blessings of the Christian covenant are enjoyed as well by baptized children as adults. Add to this the manner in which children are addressed in the Epistle to the Ephesians, as "saints," or persons consecrated by the Holy Ghost to God's service in baptism, and as being "blest with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ,"¹ and thus associated with adults in the company of the "faithful;"² and exhorted to the duties of their Christian calling;³ and I cannot see why, according to the Gospel, they should be regarded as not receiving, in "the sacrament of their regeneration,"⁴ "a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness."

Did time permit, it would be easy to show you, that in exact agreement with this view, is the entire testimony of Christ's holy Church up to the period of the reformation; that "in all the liturgic forms for the administration of infant baptism, east and west, Greek and Latin, from that in the ancient collection, called the Apostolic Canons, down to the excellent office in our Book of Common Prayer, *regeneration* is inseparably connected with the reception of *baptism*."⁴

1) Eph. i. 3.

2) Ib. vi. 1.

3) Homilies, p. 258.

4) Bishop Jolly on Bap. "'He (Jesus Christ) came,' says Irenæus, 'to

(2.) But, it is objected, that the doctrine of the *baptismal regeneration* of infants is opposed to the views of the Reformers. Beloved, let us "not believe every spirit;" not be deceived by mere party assertion. But let us, at these vaunting, self-confident times, "prove all things."

"Young children," says the Augsburg Confession, which speaks the language of Protestants throughout the continent, "are by baptism entrusted to God, *received into God's favor*," (which certainly implies *justification*,) "and made *sons of God*," (which certainly implies *regeneration*,) "as Christ speaketh of little children in the Church, Matt. xviii. *It is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.*"¹

save *all* men by Himself; *all*, I mean, who by Him are *born again* to God—*infants*, children, boys, youths, and older men; therefore he passed through every age.' Now when we consider how all but *always* the term '*born again*' is applied to baptism in the phraseology of the Fathers; Irenæus himself calling baptism 'the bath of regeneration;' Justin Martyr calling it 'the new birth'—Theophilus calling those who have experienced the rite, 'the new born'—Clemens Alex. calling them 'the regenerated by water'—we shall understand a passage which speaks of *infants* as '*born again*' to mean assuredly infants *baptized*."—BLUNT *on the Church*, p. 151.

"Infants," says Origen, "are baptized for the forgiveness of sins;" and again, "whereas the *baptism of the Church is given for the forgiveness of sins*, infants also are, by the usage of the Church, baptized; when, if there were nothing in infants that wanted forgiveness and mercy, the *grace of baptism* would be needless to them."—ORIG. *Hom. in Luc.* ch. xiv.; in *Lev.* ch. ii.

1) Syllog. Confess. p. 172.

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1) Syllog. Confess. p. 172.

"The *second birth*," says Archbishop Cranmer in his Catechism for children, "the *second birth*, whereby our inward man and mind are renewed by the Holy Ghost, so that our hearts and minds receive new desires, is by *the water of baptism*, which St. Paul calleth "the bath of regeneration;" because our sins be forgiven us in baptism, and *the Holy Ghost is poured into us*, so that by His power and working we be *born again spiritually*, and made *new creatures*." "Wherefore, good children, we be *born again by baptism*, then our *sins are forgiven us*, and the *Holy Ghost is given us* to move us to all goodness."

King EDWARD'S Catechism, approved in convocation by the holy martyrs, Cranmer and Ridley, and addressed to baptized children, says of them, that "they were, by the Spirit of Christ, *new born* and cleaned from sin, and received into the communion of saints." Another Catechism styled Nowell's, and set forth by the convocation of 1562, affirms that "the secret and spiritual grace of baptism is of two sorts—that is, *forgiveness of sins* and *regeneration*. Therefore, most great reason is it, that by baptism, as by a print of a seal, it be assured to our *infants*, that they be heirs of God's grace and of the salvation promised to the seed of the faithful."

A book, called "Reformatio Legum, &c.," care-

fully framed by four Bishops and two renowned Doctors in the reign of Edward VI., declares that, "baptism" (and it here addresses those baptized in infancy) "is a sacrament in which our *second birth is assured* to us by the outward washing, *the pardon of sins is granted*, and the *influence of the Holy Ghost is poured into our hearts*, as is implied in the words in baptism," or the baptismal office.¹

Let it be no longer said, then, that the *baptismal regeneration of infants* is a doctrine of Popery, that it belongs to an age of coldness and formality, and is to be regarded as among the extravagances of High-Churchmen. We see that it is a doctrine of Holy Scripture, a doctrine of our Liturgy, a doctrine dear to the hearts, and consecrated by the blood of the noble martyrs of the reformation; a doctrine, which, if you are faithful Christians, faithful fathers, and faithful mothers, you teach as the first lesson of

1) Some persons, I am aware, admit that the Holy Spirit is *pledged or promised* to infants in baptism, who deny that it is *granted* to them in that sacrament. In addition to what I have said on this point on pages 80 and 81, let such persons read the following from Bishop Beveridge—"But they who are in Christ, members of His body, must needs partake of the Spirit which is in Him, their Head. Neither doth the Spirit of Christ *only follow upon*, but *certainly accompanies* the sacrament of baptism, when duly administered according to His institution. For, as St. Paul saith—'By one Spirit we are all baptized into one body.' So that, in the very *act of baptizing*, the Spirit unites us unto Christ, and makes us members of His body. Therefore, *all* who are rightly baptized *with water*, are *at the same time* baptized *with the Holy Ghost*."

holiness to your lisping children; yea, teach as the subject of their earliest thanksgiving to God, "who hath vouchsafed to call them to this state of salvation through Jesus Christ."

(3.) It is objected, finally, to this doctrine, that *facts* are against it; that children *cannot all have been regenerated*, as multitudes, baptized in infancy, grow up without the signs of spiritual life, the *fruits* of regeneration.¹ I have protested, in my first discourse, against deciding upon the *truth*

1) This objection can surely have no weight with any person, except a *Calvinist*—who, in opposition to the Church, teaches that all really *regenerated* are in a state of grace from which they cannot fall, and thus lose the blessings of their high calling. With all but Calvinists, the following from Dean Comber will be conclusive: "But some may doubt whether infants be regenerate in this sense, (that of a change of heart by the influences of the Divine Spirit,) because they are not capable of giving any *evidences* of their receiving the Spirit, nor doth there any immediate effects of their regeneration appear; hence the Pelagians denied it, but they are therefore condemned by the Milevitan Council, (can. ii.) and confuted by St. Aug. (ad. Bon. lib. iii.) It is confessed they can show no visible signs of spiritual life in the operations thereof, no more can they of their having a rational soul, for some time, and yet we know they have the power of reason within them; and since all infants are alike, either *all* do here receive a principle of new life, or *none* receive it; wherefore I see no reason why we may not believe, as the ancients did, that God's grace (which is dispensed according to the capacity of the susceptible) is here given to infants to heal their nature, and that he bestowed on them such measures of his Spirit as they can receive; for the malignant effects of the first Adam's sin are not larger than the free gift obtained by the second Adam's righteousness. (Rom. v. 15, 18.) And if it be asked how it comes to pass then, that so many children do afterwards fall off to all impurity? I answer, so do too many grown persons also, and neither infants nor men are so regenerate in this life as absolutely

of any doctrine or institution of God, by its *visible effects in the lives of men*. To my mind, there is impiety in the attempt; as it involves the principle of infidelity—subjecting the *spiritual* to the trial of the *sensible*—the *infinite* to the *finite*. Unbelief is not satisfied with the fact, “thus saith the Lord;” while it is a mark of true faith, when assured of this fact, to inquire no further; but to submit, and *adore*—where it cannot *comprehend*.¹ In regard, then, to the doctrine of “baptismal regeneration,” we are to determine what our children actually

to extinguish the concupiscence: for the flesh will still lust against the Spirit; but then God gives the Spirit also to lust against the flesh. Gal. v.”
—Part iii. sec. 3. vol. iii. p. 421.

“It is *certain*, our church supposes, that *all* who are baptized in their infancy, are, at the same time, *born again*; and it is allowed that the whole office for the baptism of infants proceeds upon this supposition.”—WHEELER’S *Sermons*, vol. i. p. 405. “Published by the Methodist Episcopal Church at the Conference office.”

1) Since writing the above, the following passage from Bishop Seabury, (vol. i. p. 133) struck me as too appropriate to be omitted—“When we set up,” says the good bishop, “to judge of the *efficacy or propriety* of God’s institutions, we step out of our line: we are no judges of either: to *believe* and to *obey* make the whole of our duty. Water, we know, has no natural power to wash away sin, or to initiate men into the Church of Christ; and yet God hath appointed baptism with water to be the channel or instrument of our regeneration or new birth into His kingdom, by which, through the operation of His Spirit, we become members of Christ’s body; to use the Apostle’s style—‘of his flesh and of his bones.’ Skepticism may doubt, and philosophy may inquire, whether this be so. Faith will receive it, and piety will submit to it, as the appointment of Him whose Word is power, and who can as easily give efficacy to the water of baptism to wash away sin, as He did to the water of Jordan to wash away Naaman’s leprosy.”

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receive in the sacrament by what God *has promised to give*, and not by what appears in their after lives. These can only show us what has been *improved*. Did the Lord, in the parable, bestow upon the "slothful servant" no talent because it was "hidden," and we saw "no increase?" We admit the fact, sad and alarming as it is, that many, baptized in childhood, show no signs, in youth and manhood, of spiritual life. But what then? Must the blessed seed of the Kingdom, wherever sown, inevitably spring up and bear fruit? Is there no such thing as idleness or faithlessness to hinder its growth? Does the want of "the blade" in summer, or "the full corn" in autumn, always imply that no seed was planted in the spring? What do the weeds and briers, which shut out the hopes of harvest from the sluggard's field, proclaim, but that the good seed once sown has been left to perish by neglect? And what does the spiritual barrenness of baptized children too generally prove, but the want, not of God's regenerating grace, but of a father's or a mother's faithful, prayerful, fostering care? alas! sometimes of a child's reverence of a present God, perhaps, recognition of the Holy Ghost within? Let neglectful parents, then, no longer flatter themselves, because no fruits of the Spirit appear in the lives of their offspring, that therefore no seeds of grace were sown for them at bap-

tism, to be guarded by the parental hand, and nurtured by the parental solitudes and prayers. Let no baptized child suppose, because he now feels in his heart no motion of the divine Spirit, no constraining power to holiness of life, that he has never been visited from above—never had in his soul the living energy of baptismal grace. Depend upon it, the day of final reckoning will show, that God has been faithful to His covenant, faithful to His own blessed sacrament of regeneration; that the heavenly gifts have been received, and unimproved and squandered, and then to be accounted for.¹ Oh! let parents learn

1) It is sometimes maintained that this view of *baptismal regeneration* represses exertion for *personal holiness*. Let the late Bishop of New-York, Dr. Hobart, answer this objection, while distinguishing between *regeneration* and *renovation*. "REGENERATION is the regular commencement, in baptism, of that spiritual life of which RENOVATION is the progress and consummation. In regeneration the quickening power of the Holy Ghost is bestowed upon us, by which we receive the means of a spiritual life. In renovation this spiritual life is called into *holy energy and activity*, by the sanctifying power of the Divine Spirit.

"Our *spiritual life* having commenced in baptism, we are powerfully impelled to *cherish and perfect* it by the renewing influences of the Holy Ghost. The exalted value of the *privileges* of the Christian covenant, which are conferred on us in the regeneration of baptism, forcibly urges us to *secure* them, by fulfilling the conditions upon which they are suspended, and thus becoming renewed by the Holy Ghost.

"Having received, in the regeneration of baptism, *grace* to work out our salvation, we shall be guilty of the most inexcusable and culpable neglect, if this work is *not performed* in the renewing of our minds. *Quickened* in baptismal regeneration to a new and spiritual life, awful will be our guilt, and sore our punishment, if, by doing *despite* to this Spirit, we arrest Him in his

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to be wise. Let them learn to believe in God, to trust His unfailing word. Let them not forbid, in

progress to the *sanctification and renovation* of our hearts. Yes, Christians, called by baptism into a state of salvation, how will you answer it to your consciences, to your God, if you do not *improve* the grace which is given to you, so as to make your *calling and election sure* by your *renovation*, and by your establishment in holiness and virtue.

“Now, deny the doctrine of baptismal regeneration—make baptism, as the adversaries of baptismal regeneration contend, a mere external initiation into the Church, a mere mark or sign of difference between Christian men and others; strip this Holy Sacrament of its *graces*, its *privileges*, and where are all these powerful excitements? You have lost them—and in them you have lost the most powerful hold upon the judgment, the heart, and the conscience of the professing Christian. You cannot exhort him to cherish and to perfect his spiritual life—it has not yet commenced. You cannot excite him, by the hopes to which he is entitled, of pardon, of grace, of heaven, to fulfil his baptismal vows—no such hopes has he received. You cannot urge him to work out his salvation—he will inquire, ‘What grace have I received to accomplish this most serious work?’ You cannot warn him of the awful guilt of quenching the Spirit, and thus frustrating the work of sanctification in his soul—baptism, according to your system, conferred no gift of the Holy Ghost. You cannot say to him, ‘Christian brother, God hath called you, by baptism, out of darkness into his marvellous light; from the kingdom of sin and Satan into the kingdom of His dear Son; from being the child of wrath, to be the child of grace; walk, I beseech you, answerably to your Christian calling, and as becometh a child of light;’ you cannot address to him this exhortation, so elevating, so forcible, so animating—baptism, in your view of it, produced in him no change of spiritual condition; he is still in his natural state, without an interest in Christ, an alien and stranger to the covenant of promise.

“Say not, then, the doctrine of baptismal regeneration is a cold, a formal, a lax, and carnal doctrine. Properly understood and enforced, it lays upon the judgment, the heart, the sensibilities of Christians, obligations and motives to vital piety and true godliness, of the most powerful, awful, and at the same time, persuasive nature, and which no other system can present.”
—*Posth. Works*, vol. ii. p. 471-475.

their faithless hearts, their little ones to come to Christ, in the deep, spiritual meaning of His words. Let them believe, that the Church says true, what at the baptism of these little ones, she declares them, "regenerate with the Holy Ghost, and made Christ's own children by adoption and grace." Let them believe, when teaching their lisping babes to call themselves, by baptism, "the members of Christ, the children of God, and the inheritors of the kingdom of heaven," that they are not teaching them falsehoods nor fables. Let them believe, when teaching them that by baptism they have undergone "a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness," that they are teaching them what they intend them to credit and act upon. Yes, and let baptized children believe, that when they were presented to the holy font, Jesus their loving Saviour received them into His arms, and endowed them with the spirit and privileges of His Kingdom. Let them believe the words of their Catechism, when they "thank their heavenly Father, that He hath called them by baptism to a *state of salvation, through Jesus Christ their Saviour.*" Let them believe, when, in the words of the same Catechism, they "pray unto God that they may continue in their baptismal state unto their lives' end," that God requires them to continue in it, and not, as some say, to be converted from it; that, by every

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means, they are to strive to keep and cultivate the grace granted and pledged to this state, for the renewal of their hearts, the sanctification of their lives, and "making their calling and *election* sure." Let these things be heartily believed by parents and children, and trust me, or rather trust God, that, instead of the worldliness and wickedness which now characterize many of our baptized households, and give occasion to the enemy to blaspheme, there would be the abundant fruits of the Spirit, rejoicing the hearts of the pious, and causing multitudes to glorify God for baptismal grace. Instead of barrenness incurring the reproach of men, and calling for the curse of God, we should behold the tree of life rising in healthful vigor, and spreading itself in freshness and beauty to the honor of God, and the admiration and joy of his people.

But, O, if such be the blessing within our reach, what must be the curse of neglect? Here some awful thoughts rise from the Book of God—destruction to those who "defile the temple of the Holy Ghost, which temple we are"¹ by baptism—a visitation of divine wrath upon such as "trample under foot the Son of God, count the blood of the Covenant an unholy thing, and do despite to the Spirit of

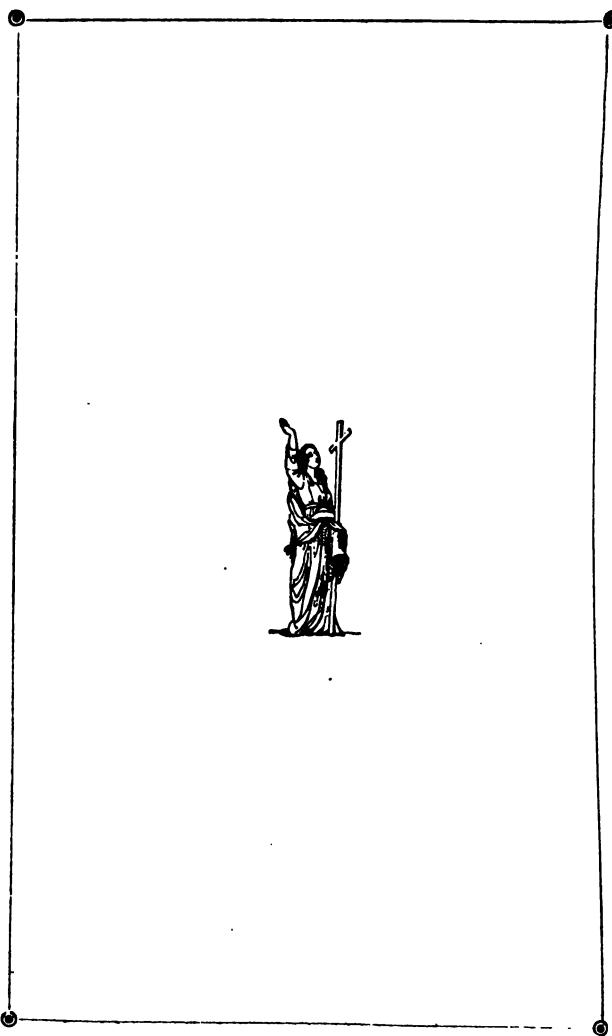
1) 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17.

Grace!"¹ Brethren, we may now be unmindful of our birthright—wholly lose sight of the blessings of our "state of salvation"—but they will be revealed to us again; and if unimproved to the last, will rise up to bear an awful testimony against us before "the Judge of quick and dead." O let us fear, lest the present absence of God's Spirit from our families and our souls, should only betoken an "everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power."²

1) Heb. x. 29.

2) 2 Thess. i. 9.





SERMON IV.

**CONFIRMATION, A MEANS OF GRACE INSTITUTED BY
ALMIGHTY GOD.**





IV.

CONFIRMATION, A MEANS OF GRACE INSTITUTED BY ALMIGHTY GOD.

Acts ii. 38.—And ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

IN my first discourse I remarked that, in the case of the early converts, under the Apostles, the gifts of the Holy Ghost were dispensed, not at once in their full measure, but in different and increasing degrees, according to the faithful use of certain prescribed means. I am now prepared to illustrate this point more fully than was then consistent with my object. For you will perceive that we have arrived, to say the least, at the *third* stage in the spiritual progress of these converts. They had been blest with a special measure of divine influence at the time of their return in self-humbling sorrow to God. And then at their baptism, they were born anew of water and the Holy

Ghost, received the pardon of their sins, and were made living members of the body of Christ. And now they are called to the enjoyment of another portion of God's Spirit ;—a portion promised, as in some sort, consequent upon, or annexed to baptism ; “ Be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the *Gift of the Holy Ghost*.”¹ Here then is promised a great blessing to baptized believers ; a blessing connected with the forgiveness of their sins and the enjoyment of Christ's fellowship ; and hence, as would seem, designed to enable them to discharge the better the ordinary duties of the Christian life, and to make their “ calling and election sure.” If this be so, and to me it certainly appears to be, then every Christian is deeply interested in having this gift of the Holy Ghost. For it is here spoken of as a high spiritual pri-

1) Vid. Ham. et Grot. in loc. Also, Bishop Doane's Fourth Charge, p. 6. “ Should it be objected, that by ascribing the gift of the Holy Ghost to *confirmation*, He seems to be excluded from baptism, I answer, it has been observed, in a former discourse, that the gifts of the Holy Ghost are intended for different purposes ; and that His operation or energy is according to the purpose for which He is given. In *baptism*, He is given for the purpose of regeneration—to effect that new birth by which we are born into the Church of Christ, obtain remission of all past sin, and a new nature. In *confirmation* He is given for the purpose of sanctification, or renovation of the heart in holiness. In *baptism*, we are created anew in Christ Jesus by the operation of the Holy Ghost. In *confirmation*, the new creation is animated, and enabled to live according to its new nature, by the energy of the same most Holy Spirit.”—Bp. SEABURY, *Discourse* v. vol. i. p. 135.

vilege—a precious dispensation of grace. True, it is not, like repentance, faith, and baptism, made a *condition* of salvation; but a *special aid* in “working out one’s salvation with fear and trembling.”¹ Neither is it represented as being a hard *duty* to which the Christian would need to be urged; but rather as a valued *gift* of which he would feel it a great privilege to be possessed, and of which he would suffer no consideration to deprive him. For whatever might be the graces he had already attained, it is to be supposed, surely, that dependent as he is upon God, he would be eager at any stage of his progress, to avail himself of a still higher measure of the Holy Ghost promised to his fidelity.

1. The question, however, here suggested, is, how is this gift to be sought? How did the three thousand who gladly received the Apostle’s words and were baptized, obtain it? Did it follow directly upon their baptism without any intermediate act? It is true, that, in their particular case, we have no record decisive of the question. And perhaps we ought not to wonder at this, as so few things could possibly be recorded, and as the practice of the Apostles *generally* would be sufficient with the humble Christian to settle a question of form in any *particular case*. And in

1) Phil. ii. 12.

were baptized?" They replied, "Unto John's baptism." When he learned, therefore, that they had received only John's baptism—a baptism simply of repentance, and not of the Holy Ghost as was Christ's—he was no longer surprised at their answer, but proceeded at once to have them baptized in the name of Christ or of the Holy Trinity—and then "laid his hands upon them and they received the Holy Ghost." We infer, therefore, and we think reasonably, that "the gift of the Holy Ghost" promised to the multitude in the text is the same as that conferred by the Apostles on the Samaritan and Ephesian converts after baptism, in "the laying on of hands."

But we have another proof of this. If St. Peter had reference in the promise of the Holy Ghost in the text, as we think, to "the laying on of hands," then the things to be observed, according to his instructions to the multitude, at the beginning of the Christian life, are repentance, faith, baptism, and the laying on of hands. But does not this catalogue of first duties accord exactly with that given in the 6th chapter of Hebrews by St. Paul, as among "the principles of the doctrine of Christ"—"repentance from dead works, faith towards God, the doctrine of baptism, the laying on of hands,"¹ etc. Here, then,

1) The following is the comment on this passage of the celebrated John Calvin. "At liberi fidelium, quoniam ab utero adoptati erant, et iure pro-

we have from St. Paul, as belonging to "the principles of the doctrine of Christ," the precise catalogue of duties, which, according to our view, St. Peter set forth as essential to the very first converts. If "out of the mouth of two or three witnesses every word is to be established," we cannot err, we think, in concluding that the fourth thing referred to in the list of St. Peter under the title, "the gift of the Holy Ghost," is the same as the fourth thing referred to in the list of St. Paul under the title, "the laying on of hands;" and hence, that they who would obtain the gift of the Holy Ghost promised to baptized believers, must seek it through the imposition of hands by the successors of the Apostles.¹

2. But you will ask, was not "the laying on of

missionis pertinebant ad corpus ecclesie, infantes baptizabantur; transacta vero infantia, postquam instituta erant in fide, se quoque ad catechesin offerbant, quæ in illis baptismo erat posterior. Sed aliud symbolum tunc adhibebatur, nempe manuum impositio." But the children of the faithful, since they were adopted from their birth, and by right of promise belonged to the Church, were baptized as infants. Their infancy, however, being past, and they being instructed in the faith, were offered for catechism, which they had after baptism. But another rite was applied, viz., the *imposition of hands*.

1) For proof that the successors of the Apostles, or Bishops, alone could *confirm*, see the following from Bishop Taylor on Episcopacy: "But this was but the first part of the power which Catholic antiquity affixed to the order of Episcopacy. The next is of confirmation of baptized people. And here the rule was this, which was thus expressed by Damascen: 'Apostolorum et successorum eorum est, per manuum impositionem donum Spiritus Sancti

hands," as practised by the Apostles, designed to impart *miraculous gifts*; and hence to be restricted to their age? I answer, that the age of the Apostles was essentially an age of miracles, and that every thing in the Christian scheme partook largely of this char-

traders; 'It belongs to the Apostles and their successors, to give the Holy Ghost by imposition of hands.* But see this in particular instance.

"The council of Eliberis, giving permission to faithful people of the laity to baptize catechumens in the cases of necessity, and exigence of journey: 'Ita tamen ut si supervixerit baptizatus, ad episcopum eum perducatur, ut per manûs impositionem proficere possit:†' 'Let him be carried to the bishop, to be improved by imposition of the bishop's hands.' This was law.

"It was also a custom, saith St. Cyprian, 'Quod nunc quoque apud nos geritur, ut qui in ecclesiâ baptizantur, per præpositos ecclesiæ offerantur, et per nostram orationem, et manûs impositionem, Spiritum Sanctum consequantur, et signaculo Domini consummentur;†' and this custom was catholic too, and the law was of universal concernment. 'Omnes fideles, per manuum impositionem episcoporum, Spiritum Sanctum post baptismum accipere debent, ut pleni Christiani accipere debent.' So St. Urban, in his decretal epistle;‡ and, 'Omnibus festinandum est sine morâ renasci, et demùm consignari ab episcopo, et septiformem Spiritûs Sancti gratiam recipere;' so saith the old author of the fourth epistle under the name of St. Clement: 'All faithful baptized people must go to the bishop to be consigned, and so by imposition of the bishop's hands, to obtain the sevenfold gifts of the Holy Ghost.'

"Meliades, in his epistle to the bishops of Spain, affirms confirmation in this to have a special excellency besides baptism: 'Quodd solûm à summis sacerdotibus confertur;' 'because bishops only can give confirmation;' and the same is said and proved by St. Eusebius, in his third epistle, enjoining great veneration to this holy mystery: 'Quodd ab aliis perfici non potest nisi à summis sacerdotibus;' 'It cannot, it may not, be performed by any but by the bishops.'"—*Episcopacy Asserted*, (Appleton's reprint) p. 161.

* Epist. de Chorepisc.

† Apud Sev. Binium, in 1 tom. Concil.

‡ Epist. ad Jubaian.

acteristic; that the acts most vital to the life of God in the soul, were employed as miraculous agencies. Faith, the great means of our justification, was to be the instrument to the early Christians of working miracles. "These signs shall follow them that believe: In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." But because faith is thus made the instrument of working miracles, you do not argue that its use was confined to that age; or to working miracles *alone*. Why then should you argue this of "the laying on of hands?"¹ Why should you sup-

1) Bishop McIlvaine, of Ohio, uses the following illustration to meet the above objection—"We have no reason to suppose that miraculous gifts were a more universal accompaniment of the imposition of hands upon Christians generally, than they were of the same outward gesture when used in ordaining to the ministry. But we have not ceased to imitate the Apostolic practice of the laying on of hands with prayer for the Holy Ghost, when persons are set apart for the ministry, because we cannot, like the Apostles, confer the miraculous gifts of the Spirit. And we see not why, in the same circumstances, we should not as well continue to follow their example in reference to Christians in general, and thus, when sinners profess 'repentance from dead works,' and 'faith towards God,' and have obeyed 'the doctrine of baptism,' confer upon them that which is next in the Apostle's catalogue of 'principles of the doctrine of Christ,' 'the laying on of hands,' with solemn prayer that they 'may increase in the Holy Spirit more and more,' and so be prepared for the last two of those principles, 'resurrection from the dead and eternal judgment.'"

pose, because this rite was employed in communicating *miraculous* as well as ordinary grace, that therefore it must be restricted to a miraculous age; while faith, which was employed in the same way, is admitted by every body to be necessary to the end of time? And if "the laying on of hands" was designed to impart only miraculous grace, why did not Philip, who had the power of working miracles, impart it? Why must the Apostles be sent to do it?

But besides this, "the laying on of hands" to impart the Holy Ghost, is always represented in the New Testament as *appended to baptism*. In the text—in the case of the Samaritan and Ephesian converts, and in the list of "the principles of the doctrine of Christ" given by St. Paul in the Hebrews, this is the fact. But would "the laying on of hands," if it were designed only as a temporary thing, be thus attached to, so as to be made in some sense a part of, a permanent and most essential sacrament of the Church?—Baptism, therefore, being of perpetual obligation, we are justified in the inference, that "the laying on of hands" appended to it, is of perpetual obligation likewise.

Again, there is a still stronger argument for the perpetuity of this scriptural rite. St. Paul associates it with repentance, faith, and baptism, and places it with them among the very *first principles* of the

doctrine of Christ—at the very *foundation* of Christian obedience. “Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ,” says he, “not laying *again* the *foundation*.” Now we all know how vital to any system are its first principles—whether that system be law, medicine, merchandise, or religion—that these principles enter into its very being; are necessary to its legitimate success. We know, too, the importance of the foundation to the safety of the superstructure. But the Apostle makes these first principles, this foundation of the Christian scheme, to consist of “repentance, faith, baptism,” and “*the laying on of hands*,” &c. Can we safely dispense with one of these vital principles? safely take away one of the stones from the foundation of this spiritual edifice? Besides, we all admit the binding obligation, throughout all time, of the three other principles—repentance, faith, and baptism. Upon what kind of reasoning, then, can we dispense with the fourth—“laying on of hands?” You inquire here, perhaps, does not this “laying on of hands” mean ordination?”¹ I will leave it with the common sense

1) We find in Scripture, that the rite of *laying on of hands* was practised on several occasions; in ordination of the clergy, in healing the sick, and in conferring blessings. But neither of these can be that laying on of hands which the text mentions (Heb. vi. 2), because neither of these can be a *fundamental principle* of Christianity. Fundamental principles must regard all Christians, and be necessary for all, whereas, these instances of

of honest minds, whether, when St. Peter and St. John laid their hands on the converts at Samaria—converts consisting of men and women just brought to a knowledge of Christianity, as the inspired record tells us—they intended to *ordain* them; whether, when St. Paul laid his hands upon the disciples at Ephesus—disciples so ignorant as never to have heard of the gift of the Holy Ghost, and so little advanced as not to have received Christian baptism—he intended to *ordain* them; whether, when he speaks in the Hebrews of certain lukewarm Christians as having laid the foundation of the Christian life in the laying on of hands, but as having made no progress, needing still “to be fed with milk”—he intends to say they had been *ordained* to the ministry! Indeed this is too feeble an objection to require an answer—it falls by its own weight.

But we have other passages from the writings of St. Paul, which seem to give to confirmation, or “laying on of hands,” a high spiritual value to the Christian. In the primitive Church, confirmation was called the *seal* of the Holy Ghost¹ put upon bap-

laying on of hands regard particular Christians only. But the laying on of hands of which we now treat, is something in which all Christians are concerned; as much as they are in *repentance, faith, baptism*, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment.”—Br. SEABURY, *Discourses* v. vol. i.

1) “This is our practice,” says the Holy Cyprian, after remarking that it

tism, and hence the following texts were always considered as referring to this sacred rite. "He which establisheth or confirmeth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God, who hath also *sealed* us, and given the earnest of the Spirit into our hearts." Again, writing to those whom he had confirmed at Ephesus, he says, "In whom also, after ye believed, ye were *sealed* with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance." And again, "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are *sealed* unto the day of redemption." Every humble Christian, therefore, more anxious to "work out his salvation" than to sustain a party system, would hardly fail, one would think, to seek, through "the laying on of hands," this *seal* of God's Spirit—this earnest of an eternal inheritance—yea, thus in his warfare to put on the whole armor of God.

3. But suppose, after all these Scripture proofs,

was founded upon that of the Apostles in the case of the Samaritan converts, 'with regard to such persons as are baptized in the Church, who are brought before the Bishops, and so receive the Holy Ghost by our prayer over them, the imposition of our hands upon them, and thus at length are *perfected with the seal of our Lord.*' Ep. 73. ad Jub. Tertullian calls confirmation 'the *seal* of the flesh, for the defence of the Spirit.' Also Cornelius, Bishop of Rome, says, 'that though Novatus were baptized, yet not being consecrated with the *seal* of confirmation, he could not receive the Holy Ghost.'—EUSEBIUS, *Ecc. Hist.* lib. 6. While St. Ambrose reminds the young Christian of the *spiritual seal* (*signaculum spirituale*) which he had received in confirmation.—*Lib. de Initiand.* c. 7.

there were some reasonable ground for difference of opinion upon the binding nature of confirmation, or "the laying on of hands," as a Christian duty; is there no way open to us of settling this difference? You sometimes differ in regard to the meaning of a legal enactment, and you resort to a court of justice to have it determined—submitting the case to the judges of law. But how do they determine it? By simply interposing their judgment as to the meaning of the words of the enactment? Certainly not; but by inquiring into the judgment of those who pronounced or acted upon its meaning soon after the enactment became a law, and deciding accordingly. And this to you is, as it ought to be, satisfactory. Why not, then, adopt the same method in adjusting the disagreement about confirmation? Here is a principle of the Gospel, embodied in the practice and set forth in the writings of the Apostles. But we differ about its application; some restricting it to the age of miracles, and others viewing it as designed for all Christians in all ages. Why not refer the question to the decision of the Church immediately after the days of the Apostles? Christians then must have known the mind of these Apostles in regard to the continuance of "the laying on of hands," and must have been governed by it in their practice. The practice of the first Christians, therefore, after the

Apostolic age, affords a safe, and, we think, unerring guide to ourselves in settling this matter. And do you not rely upon their practice and testimony in other cases? How do you know that the book called the New Testament and made the foundation of our eternal hopes, is really what it professes to be, the revelation of God to us sinners? How, but because the first Christians or the primitive Church received it and handed it down as such? Upon what authority do you keep holy the *first* instead of the *seventh* day of the week? God hallowed the *seventh* day and commanded *it* to be observed as sacred. Why have you consented to a change from this to the *first* day? Is there any thing in God's word which requires this change? It is true, that after the resurrection of our Lord the disciples met to celebrate this event and worship God on the *first* day of the week, as we learn from two or three casual notices in the New Testament. But is this enough of itself to authorize so great a change? How then do you feel warranted in making it? Simply because the Catholic Church, soon after the Apostles, made it, and pleaded in justification of her practice their authority. Now to the *universal* practice' of this same Church, at the same

1) "About eighty years after St. John," says Dr. Hook, "flourished Tertullian, who mentions the custom (that of confirmation) as *universal* —" After baptism is laying on of hands, by blessing and prayer inviting the Holy

period, and justified by the same Apostolic authority, do we call upon you to yield your judgments in the question of confirmation. And have we not a right, from your own principles, to expect you will do this? You appeal to St. Clement, to Tertullian, to the holy Cyprian, to Cornelius of Rome, to Dionysius, to St. Ambrose, Jerome, and Basil, and to the Council of Laodicea, for proof of the canonical authority of the books of the New Testament, and of the change of holy time from the seventh to the first day of the week. But these, in every case, are the very witnesses,¹ with others, to the universal practice in the primitive Church of confirmation, or "laying on of

Spirit, who graciously descends from the Father upon the bodies cleansed and blessed by baptism."—*Tra. de Bap.* c. 8. "Do you demand," says St. Jerome, "where we find an authority for confirmation? I answer, in the Acts of the Apostles. But although we could produce no positive authority from Scripture, yet the consent and practice of the whole world in this respect, would have the force of a commandment."—*Hieron. Cont. Lucifer.* cap. 4.

1) Clem. Constit. lib. 3, c. 17, et Ep. 4. Ter. de Bap. cap. 6. Cypr. Ep. ad Jub. 73. Cornel. Rom. Eusebius Eccl. Hist. lib. 6. c. 33. Dionys. Eccl. Hist. cap. 4. St. Ambr. lib. de Init. ind. cap. 7. et de sacram. lib. 3, c. 2, et comment. in Hebr. 6 initio. Hieron. Dial. adv. Lucifer. St. Basil records that Eubulus and he were confirmed by Bp. Maximus. Vid. Comb. vol. iii. p. 455. Council Laodic. canon 48. Council Elib. can. 77, required that Bishops should confirm by their benediction those who had not been baptized in their presence. "For it is to be noted," says Dean Comber, "that where the Bishop was present, and the person baptized was of full age, the rite of confirmation immediately followed baptism; which otherwise, especially in the Western Church, was deferred till some time after."—*Comber on Confirmation.*

hands," as derived from the Apostles. How, then, can you resist their testimony? If you rely upon it in the one case, upon what pretence, I pray you, do you reject it in the other?

It is sometimes pleaded, I am aware, that this holy rite became early corrupted by the Romish Church. I grant it;—but so Baptism, so did the Lord's Supper, so were the Scriptures themselves. But did this corruption destroy the necessity of these things? Because others were guilty of corrupting or perverting them, shall we be held innocent for altogether abandoning them? The Church in England swept off the Romish corruptions, and presented confirmation, with the other rites and sacraments, in their original simplicity, and under their original, scriptural authority.¹

What I have said is surely enough to convince honest minds that the Church has a divine warrant for calling upon her members to receive, in the imposition of hands, an increased measure of the Holy Ghost.² That she does call upon them to receive this, is quite clear from her office for Confirmation, as also from the prayer for the consecration of a church. In the prayer which precedes "the laying

1) See note A at the end of this sermon.

2) "We have the evidence, that in the earliest period of the Apostolic ministry, there was the practice on the part of the Apostles, of the laying on of hands upon the baptized, and that it was specially connected with receiving the Holy Ghost."—Br. McILVAINE.

on of hands" by the Bishop, she puts into his mouth this language, after enumerating what God had already done for the candidate in baptism—"Strengthen them, we beseech Thee, O Lord, *with the Holy Ghost, the Comforter.*" And then, as his hands rest upon the head of each candidate, she directs him to pray—"Defend, O Lord, this Thy servant with Thy *heavenly grace*, that he may continue Thine forever; and daily *increase* in Thy Holy Spirit more and more." And finally, in the prayer for consecrating a church—"Grant, O Lord, that they who in this place are confirmed by the Bishop, *may receive such a measure of Thy Holy Spirit*, that they may be enabled faithfully to fulfil their vows." No one, not pledged by another system to set aside the plain teaching of these words, can fail to perceive that the Church here encourages the candidate to expect in this holy rite a new gift of the Holy Ghost.¹

4. Another question, however, arises in this

1) "The solemn renewal of our baptismal covenant, will be accompanied, in this holy ordinance [confirmation] with the solemn conveyance to you, on the part of God, by the instrumentality of His authorized minister, of all your baptismal privileges—of His mercy, that will blot out your transgressions—of His Holy Spirit, that will sanctify your corrupt natures, aid you in the discharge of duty, and support you in all your trials—of His almighty power, by which you shall overcome your last and terrible enemy, even death, and by which, shaking off the bands of corruption, and rising from the darkness of the tomb, you shall enter on immortal life and glory."
—BISHOP HOBART, *on Confirmation*, Poeth. Works, vol. ii. p. 97.

place :—Does the Holy Ghost descend upon the candidate at the will of the officiating Bishop? Certainly not, except as his will concurs with the will of God, and the hearty and penitent desire of the candidate. The blessing is from God, as the institution for conveying it is of Him. The Bishop, at His command, acts only as His appointed instrument. He has no power of himself to do less or more than what God in His mercy wills. And God does will, as we have proved, that, through this rite of his own appointment, the Holy Ghost shall descend upon the faithful; does will, that when the hands of the Bishop are placed upon a head, beneath which there throbs a broken and contrite heart, the Apostolic benediction shall not be without heavenly grace to the soul.

5. Here, then, the *qualifications* for “the laying on of hands” demand our notice. And they must be stated in reference to two classes of persons. (1.) As regards those who, with repentance and faith, have come in adult age to holy baptism, we see in the case of the three thousand, that they need no farther qualifications to receive this Apostolic gift of the Holy Ghost. They had the privilege, immediately upon being baptized, of partaking of this heavenly grace. And it is their solemn duty at once to partake of it, as also of the body and blood of our blessed Lord. It is the neglect of this duty, which leaves so many in a

state of spiritual languor and deadness to Christ. Brethren, in your tillage of the soil, you find it needful not only to sow the seed, but also to cultivate the plant; and to adapt your labor to each stage of its vegetation. It is so in regard to your Christian advancement. God has adapted the means of grace to the different stages of your spiritual progress. And if you fail to apply these means as your needs arise—if you rely for your maturity in the Christian life upon the grace adapted to the infancy of your Christian state—if you depend upon baptism, and neglect confirmation, or upon confirmation, and neglect the holy communion, you may rest assured that the grace of God will soon become extremely feeble, if not extinct, in your souls. He that would realize within him the fruits of the Spirit, must use in their order all the means of grace appointed by God to produce them. But (2,) there are others, and I thank God, the largest portion of our congregations, who were regenerated in their infancy. And here again, to our shame be it spoken, there are two descriptions to be addressed. One, and we fear a small one, constitute those who have been in a good degree faithful to their vows, as “members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of Heaven;” in whose hearts the regenerating grace of God has been cherished, the baptismal seed of the kingdom has taken

deep root, and sent up vigorous and healthful plants. Such Christians even in their earliest years need little exhortation to repentance. Alive to the enormity of sin, they have long since deplored their guiltiness before God—have shed many a bitter tear at the cross of Jesus, and sought in faith the cleansing of His precious blood. And they have not sought in vain. From Him, their glorious Head, purifying and refreshing streams flow daily into their souls. And when the period of their maturity in Christian knowledge has come, they are fit—so far as fallen creatures can be fit—and they are generally ready, too, with a glad and thankful heart, to bow before the altar of their gracious Father in Heaven, and claim the promised gift. But of those baptized in childhood, I am forced, in duty as well as in sorrow, to note another class. They have not lived in the fear of God, nor been mindful of His covenant. Their hearts have risen up in rebellion against baptismal vows, and baptismal grace. Brought into a state of salvation through Christ, they have abused their heavenly gifts—bartered away their noble birthright, and gone so far, perhaps, as with the fool, “to make a mock at sin.” With regard to such, O how deep must be the sorrow, how self-abasing the humility, how earnest the prayers, how lowly and unreserved the submission to Christ, to cancel, through His blood, the deep-dyed

sins of their perfidy, revive within them the expiring graces of the covenant, restore them to the love and fellowship of its divine Head; and thus prepare them to receive from His exhaustless treasures, a higher gift of the Holy Ghost.

1. To such persons, let me first address the word of admonition. You are in an awful state. Indeed what can be more awful this side the bar of judgment! You have been admitted to all the blessings of that salvation, wrought out in the amazing sacrifice of God's only Son; have been admitted to the most intimate fellowship with Him as "Head over all things unto the Church," to the full and free enjoyment of every means of grace, and every hope of glory, which came up to us from His opening grave on the resurrection morn; to all the reviving and enriching showers of His love which descended upon His Church on the Pentecostal day. If "it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah at the day of judgment, than for Bethsaida and Capernaum," O what must be the weight, the accumulation of misery to you, who, baptized into Christ, made partakers of the heavenly gifts of his covenant, "have trampled under foot the Son of God, counted the blood of the covenant an unholy thing, and done despite unto the Spirit of grace!" "God have mercy upon you: Christ have mercy upon you"—kindle in your obdu-

rate heart the grace of repentance, bring you humbly to His Cross, and restore to you the rejected blessings of His covenant of love, that you may not be cast off in the day of His second coming to "judge the world in righteousness!" may not sink into perdition under the aggravated doom of the slothful servant!

2. And to you, my young friends, who have acknowledged the gifts of the holy covenant—returned hearty thanks to your heavenly Father that He called you by baptism to this state of salvation through Christ—daily prayed to Him to keep you in this state, and added your earnest endeavors to fulfil the vows that are upon you, but who, from a sense of unworthiness, have hitherto timidly shrunk from a public ratification of these vows at confirmation; to you let me address words of encouragement and exhortation. Your timidity and backwardness threaten a serious injury to your spiritual state—a serious impediment to your spiritual advance. The moment you came to years of understanding, you needed the grace of "the laying on of hands,"¹ and the nourishment of the body and blood of Christ. Your infancy was fed with "the milk of the word"—your

1) "In baptism we are made Christians; but yet the new-baptized is but an infant in Christ: in confirmation he is advanced to the rank of adults, and made a perfect man in Christ Jesus."—Br. SEABURY, vol. i. p. 135.

moral being now demands other and more substantial food—"the meat that endureth to eternal life." You have already received from the Church all the spiritual nutriment which she is allowed to give till you ask for a new measure of grace in "the laying on of hands." Should you delay, your souls will soon be in a languishing, starving condition. They cannot maintain their life and vigor without food from the holy table of our Lord. "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye will have no life in you."

Do ye say, or do your parents tell you, that you are too young for these solemn duties? Ask them if you are too young to be ensnared by the temptations of "the world, the flesh, and the devil," which you are so solemnly bound to Almighty God, through the whole of your mortal life, to renounce? Ask them if you run no risk, are in no danger of losing, by delay, your present tenderness of conscience—your present enjoyment of regenerating grace—your present "hungering and thirsting after righteousness"—and of getting in their stead, a heart alienated from God, and filled with the tastes, and hankerings, and follies of the world? O the guilt of thoughtless parents! O the bitterness of woe which they are treasuring for themselves against the last day!

Fathers and mothers—what meant the blessed

Saviour when He said—"Suffer the little children to come unto me?"—when he commanded the Church, through St. Peter, "Feed my lambs?" What meant the holy St. Paul, when he exhorted—"Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord?" What meant your holy mother, the Church, when she directed—"Ye are to take care that this child be brought to the Bishop, to be confirmed by him, so soon as he can say the creed, the Lord's prayer, and the ten commandments, and is sufficiently instructed in the other parts of the Church catechism set forth for that purpose?" What mean, then, your timid, your discouraging counsels to your children now, if those counsels be just, but that you have not sought in prayer and faith, and the deep earnestness of stewards accountable to God, to make them feel that they are sworn members of His Church, to keep them steadfast in the faith to which, at their baptism, they were so solemnly pledged; to nourish them day by day with the spiritual food set before them in God's Church; and thus to prepare them for the due reception of those holy mysteries which He has intrusted for them to the ministry of His Church, that their souls may live? What mean their present melancholy state, their wavering in the truth, their halting in the way of life, their leaning to strange doctrine, their hankering for sin? What, but that you, their

sureties for the Church, their guardians for God and Christ her divine Head, have exposed them to the influence of error, or left them to the temptations of "the world, the flesh, and the devil"—taught them to regard their creeds with indifference, and the Church's glorious provisions as vain and empty ceremonies! Parents, for all these things God will bring you into judgment!

NOTE A, p. 115.

The great leader of the German reformation agreed with the English Church, as will be seen by reference to the Saxon Confession,* in her views of confirmation. Also Calvin concludes his comment, which I have already adduced, upon Heb. vi. 2, with this strong language—"Hic unus locus abunde testatur, hujus ceremonie originem fluxisse ab Apostolis." "This text alone is abundant proof of the Apostolic origin of this rite"—confirmation or laying on of hands;† and then after speaking of the Romish conception of this rite, concludes thus—"Quam obrem hodie retinenda pura institutio est; superstitio autem corrigenda." Wherefore the pure institution ought to be restored in our day, the superstition being corrected. The same opinion in favor of confirmation is given by Calvin in his *Institutions*, b. iv. c. 19. Dr. Owen, a celebrated non-conformist, gives to vi. 2 of Heb. a like interpretation with Calvin—see vol. iii. p. 33 of his works. Both of the opinions of these distinguished men are inserted with approbation into a report of a committee (Drs. James Richards, Samuel Miller, and John B. Romeyn) of the General Assembly of the *Presbyterian Church*; which report, after quoting an eloquent passage from Hooker, proceeds to remark—"This rite of confirmation, thus administered to baptized children, when arrived at competent years, and previously instructed and prepared for

*) Confession Saxonica de Confirm.

†) Theodore Beza also asserts the Apostolic institution of confirmation.

it, with the express view of their admission to the Lord's Supper, shows clearly that the *primitive Church in her purest days* exercised the authority of a mother over her baptized children."

The Confession of Faith of the Baptists of England, adopted by the Baptist Association of this country, contains the following passage: "We believe that 'laying on of hands' with prayer, upon baptized believers as such, is an *ordinance of Christ*, and ought to be submitted unto by all such persons as are permitted to partake of the Lord's Supper. And that the end of this ordinance is not for the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, but for a farther reception of the Holy Spirit of promise, or for the addition of the graces of the Spirit and the influences thereof—to *confirm*, strengthen and comfort them in Christ Jesus."—Ed. 1887, p. 68.

Mr. John Wesley, in his Notes on the New Testament—a work adopted as a text-book by the *Methodist preachers*—says, in commenting on Heb. vi. 2: "*Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ*—that is, saying no more of them for the present—*let us go on unto perfection*; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works—from open sins, the very first thing to be insisted on, and *faith in God*, the very next point. So St. Paul, in his very first sermon at Lystra (Acts xiv. 15): *Turn from these vanities unto the living God*. And when they believed, they were to be baptized with the baptism (not of the Jews nor of John, but) of Christ. The next thing was, to lay hands on them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost. After which they were more fully instructed, touching the resurrection, and the general judgment, called *eternal*, because the sentence then pronounced is irreversible, and the effects of it remain forever." It is perfectly manifest, that Mr. Wesley is here setting forth that exposition of the principles of the doctrine of Christ, which he regards as binding upon men now;—among which principles is "the laying on of hands upon Christians that they may receive the Holy Ghost."—Vid. WESLEY, in loc.

Dr. Adam Clarke too gives to confirmation the following important testimony:

In the first volume of his life, as published by the Methodist Book Concern at New York, in 1833, the doctor gives the following account (p. 94) of his own confirmation:

"It was at this time that the Bishop of Bristol held a confirmation in the Collegiate Church. I had never been confirmed, and as I had a high respect for all the rites and ceremonies of the Church, I wished to embrace

this opportunity to get the blessing of that amiable and apostolic-looking prelate, Dr. Lewis Bagot. I asked permission ; several of the preachers' sons went with me, and I felt much satisfaction in this ordinance ; to me it was very solemn, and the whole was well conducted. Mrs. S. who was a Presbyterian, pitied my being so ' long held in the oldness of the letter.' I have lived *nearly forty years since*, and upon *this point my sentiments are not changed.*"

Again, in the third volume of the same work, page 123, is the following letter, written by Dr. Clarke, only two years before his death :

"Hayden Hall, June, 1830.

"DEAR MRS. WILKINSON:—You wish for my opinion on the subject of confirmation. It is supposed to be a rite by which the moral burden is taken off the shoulders of the sponsors, and transferred to those shoulders to which it properly belongs. Now, as long as these opinions and feelings relative to it prevail in the minds of all parties, I say in God's name let the rite, duly administered, be humbly received ; but the subjects of it should be well informed that by it they have not merely performed a duty, and so far may have an easy conscience, but in addition they have by it taken a strong and perpetual yoke upon their necks, in their vow "to renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh, and that they should keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of their lives." This is no ordinary obligation. This they solemnly take on them when they come to be confirmed, and by the act they come under a new and perpetual covenant to give themselves wholly to God, that they may have a thorough "death unto sin," and a complete "new birth unto righteousness." Should any young person say, if all this is comprised in being confirmed, then I will not be confirmed at all, I answer, you are bound to all this by your profession of Christianity ; so that, confirmed or not confirmed, this yoke is about your neck, and if you break it, or throw it away, it is at the peril of your final destruction. Again, the rite itself is useful to call these things to remembrance, and who knows how much grace may be received during the performance of the ceremony, and especially by having a holy man's hands laid on your head, and the blessing and protection of God solemnly invoked in your behalf? Tell these things to your dear daughters and sons, and tell them another thing of which few would think, namely, that not having had the opportunity of being confirmed when I had arrived at that age in which

I had an ecclesiastical right to receive it, I was determined not to be without it, and therefore went and *received confirmation even since I became a Methodist preacher*. Yes, I was confirmed in the Collegiate Church, at Bristol, in the year 1782, by that very holy man, Dr. Lewis Bagot, then bishop of that see, and afterwards bishop of Norwich. You see now, my good sister, both from my teaching and my practice, what I think of the rite of confirmation, and I will just add one word more. I believe the rite will be very solemnly administered by the present bishop of London, who will go through the whole with an honest conscience before God. I have sometimes thought that I should write a little tract on this, as I did on the third collect for grace, now called 'The Traveller's Prayer.'

"ADAM CLARKE."

We are now prepared to adopt, in conclusion, the subjoined language on this subject, of the Bishop of Ohio, Dr. McIlvaine. "To the members of our communion who are surrounded by loquacious adversaries, and sometimes staggered in the faith, 'by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive,' we say, 'hold fast to this form of sound words.' When 'the enemy cometh in like a flood,' and vexes you with questions respecting the ground on which your attachment to the rite of confirmation is based, lift up your standard and say—*On the ground of Apostolic practice, uninterrupted, and for fifteen hundred years undisputed; and the present consensaneous testimony of the highest councils of the four great divisions of Christendom—Episcopalians, Methodists, Baptists, and Presbyterians.*"





SERMON V.

THE APOSTLES' FELLOWSHIP.





V.

THE APOSTLES' FELLOWSHIP.

Acts ii. 42.—And they continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

WE have now traced the progress of the first Christian converts, from the earliest movement, through the preaching of the word, of the Holy Spirit upon their hearts, to the bestowment of His sealing gifts, in "the laying on of hands." Blest with the grace of repentance, the regeneration of baptism, the seal of fellowship with God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, in confirmation, they are sent forth, cheered by the prayers and encouragements of the Church, into the world, to "work out their salvation,"¹ and "make their calling and election sure."² But they are taught to regard themselves

1) Phil. ii. 12.

2) 2 Pet. i. 10.

as still in the midst of danger; still under necessity to see to it, that they "receive not the grace of God in vain;"¹ under necessity to abide by the ark of the holy covenant, to strengthen within them, by every instituted means, the various ties of that holy fellowship, that blessed "communion of saints," of which it is their high privilege to be partakers. "They continue, therefore, steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."

No apology will be required of me, for passing over the modern interpretations of this text, and adopting the one most agreeable to the original Greek, and the sense of the primitive Church.

1. The new converts, having received their symbol of faith from the Apostles, been admitted by them to holy baptism, confirmed in the grace of regeneration by "the laying on of their hands," "continue steadfastly in the *Apostles' doctrine*;" or firmly adhere, notwithstanding the efforts for their apostacy, to the faith into which they had been baptized, or to their *baptismal creed*. This, I shall not hesitate to affirm, was, in substance, our Apostles' Creed, now in the Book of Common Prayer.

That the Church received from the Apostles a

1) 2 Cor. vi. 1.

baptismal creed is attested by the concurrent voice of primitive antiquity.¹ The words of Irenæus are: "The Church received from the Apostles and their disciples this faith or creed;"² which Tertullian styles, "*the rule of faith*,"³ affirming that "it descended to us from the beginning of the Gospel."⁴ Hence we find manifest notices of such a creed scattered throughout the Apostolic Epistles, under the different titles—"the form of doctrine,"⁵ "the rule,"⁶ "the depositum committed to our trust,"⁷ "the form of sound words,"⁸ "the faith once delivered to the saints."⁹ Again, this baptismal creed seems to have been prepared by the *Twelve*, as was necessary at the very beginning of their ministry. A writer near the age, and under the name of St. Clement of Rome,¹⁰ says, in a letter to the Bishop of Jerusalem,

1) The following are the words of a distinguished writer as quoted by Dean Comber. Omnes orthodoxi patres affirmant symbolum ab ipsis apostolis conditum.—SIXTUS SEMEN. *Bibliothec.* l. ii. *Verbo Apostol.* With him agree Luther, Calvin, Beza, P. Martyr, and Bullinger; as do also the Confessions of Saxony, France and Bohemia. Vide Luther, detribus Symbol. Calv. Inst. lib. 2. Bez. Annot. in Rom. xii. 6. P. Mart. Loc. Com. Mias. Bulling. Decad. Sax. Confes. c. 5. Gal. Confes. Art. 5. Confes. Bohem.

2) Advr. Hær. l. i. c. 2. 3) De Prescrip. advr. Hær. l. i. c. 13.

4) Advr. Prax. c. 2. 5) Rom. vi. 17. 6) Gal. vi. 16. Phil. iii. 16.

7) 1 Tim. vi. 20. Jerome says, *Fidei depositum custodi.* See also Chrys. in loc. 8) 2 Tim. i. 13. 9) Jude 3.

10) The following are the words of Dean Comber in introducing this passage: "Clemens Romanus in his epistle to our Lord's brother, (not to James,

“ that the Apostles having received the gift of tongues, while they were yet together, by joint consent composed the creed, which the Church of the faithful now holds.” And this appears reasonable from the necessity of the case. None of the books of the New Testament were then written ; neither were they till many years subsequent. Hence, as believers from the very first, were required to make profession of their faith in some definite form¹—which profession they were strictly to abide by—the preparation of a creed, that could easily be committed to memory, seems quite indispensable. Allusion, therefore, it can hardly be doubted, was made by St. Paul to such a creed, when he exhorts the Thessalonians, “ to stand fast, and hold the traditions they had been taught, by *word*” as well as “ by his Epistle.”² And when we add, that, as all other creeds profess to be based upon the Apostles’ Creed, and are traceable to their several authors, but as this is without a known author, if we deny its origin to the Apostles ; and, finally, as the unvarying testimony of the primitive Church concurs in the declaration of Leo the Great, that “ we have

as some *mistake*, but to *Simon*, his successor,) Bishop of Jerusalem, saith, “ That the Apostles,” &c. I have not been able to ascertain upon what authority the learned and generally accurate Dean makes this assertion.

1) Vide Aug. de Tem. Ser. 115. Hier. Ep. 61, ad Pamm.

2) 2 Thes. ii. 15.

this rule of faith from Apostolic institution ;"¹ I see not that the conclusion is unreasonable, that "the Apostles' doctrine," in which the early converts "steadfastly continued," is *substantially* the Apostles' Creed now in our Prayer Book.

Here, then, is a form of sound words, provided by the Apostles for the first Christians—fundamental in its character—infallible as "a rule of faith"—intelligible to all classes—easily learned by heart, and as easily retained ; and not more a guide to the truth, than a shield, broad and impenetrable, against heresy. No wonder that these Christians adhered to it with a firm and dauntless courage—cherishing it sacredly in their hearts—giving it depth, and expansion, and power within them, by meditation upon other "words

1) Serm. II. de pass. Vide Ambros. Epist. 81, in which he affirms that "this creed was made by the twelve Apostles." Also Jerome, Ep. ad Fam., where he styles it "the symbol of our faith and hope handed down from the Apostles." Also St. Augustine, de Bapt. in Donat. l. iv. c. 24, and, finally Rufinus, Exposit. Symbol. ad Cal. Cyprian, p. 17.

I know the learned Bingham has used some arguments, and quoted some great names, to sustain the opposite conclusion, but, in my view, to very little account. The only argument deserving notice is that drawn from the fact, that the early Fathers call *all* creeds then in use *Apostolical*. The examination even which I have been able to make, shows that nothing more is to be inferred from this fact than that the Fathers trace all the primitive creeds to the Apostles' Creed as their common origin. A mother bank gives existence and name to all her distant branches. Dean Comber I cannot but regard as having sufficiently answered, in anticipation, every objection that has or can be urged against the above view.

of eternal life"—"contending earnestly for it"—"not counting their lives dear unto themselves, if having kept this faith, they might finish their course with joy."¹

2. But again, they "continued steadfastly in the Apostles' fellowship." Made partakers of that fellowship in holy baptism, confirmed in it by "the laying on of hands," and knit together in it still more closely by the power of faith and love—which kept them steadfast, and gave them increase in their holy profession—they suffer no reproaches nor persecutions that might be heaped upon the Apostles—their "ministers in Christ's stead"—to force them from their communion. But adhering to them as disciples to a master—leaning upon them as children upon a father—they make common cause with them against every foe, become equal sharers with them in every tie of friendship, and every blessing of the Gospel of peace; thus "in one heart and one spirit striving together with them for the faith of the Gospel."²

3. Moreover, they continued steadfastly *in the Apostles' breaking of bread*. For thus the words may well be put together. The Greek, indeed, as well as the whole drift of the passage, seems to require it. Hence the meaning is, that these first

1) Acts xx. 24.

2) Phil. i 27.

Christians persevered, not only in that kindly intercourse and hospitality, that intercommunity of earthly blessings, which flowed from the new and heavenly fellowship, but also in a faithful participation of *the body and blood of Christ*, in His holy supper;¹ in a devout and thankful regard to the commanded sacrament received from their Lord by His Apostles, and, through this instrumentality, delivered to them, in the deep and startling language—"Take, eat, *this is MY BODY*," "Drink ye all of this, for *this is MY BLOOD*;"² in an earnest and trembling conviction of the necessity, to their souls' life and health, of this "spiritual food and sustenance"—a conviction deepened in their minds, doubtless, by the awful words of

1) Dr. Bloomfield, in his comment upon this passage, uses the following language—"Now this *may* be understood of the *Eucharist*, yet as verse 46 undoubtedly has reference to the same subject, and cannot be so understood," &c. Had the doctor attended carefully to the reasoning of the venerable and learned Joseph Mede, B. ii. Dis. 1 Cor. 11, 22, I feel morally certain, that he would, to say the least, have been much less positive in this last assertion, respecting the allusion of v. 46. For to my mind, after having read the argument of this most able and estimable divine, it is perfectly clear that this 46th verse means, (to use his words,) "That when they had performed their daily devotions in the temple, at the accustomed times of prayer there, they used to resort immediately to the *Cenaculum*, or 'upper room of Sion,' and there, having celebrated the mystical banquet of the Holy Eucharist, afterwards took their ordinary and necessary repast with gladness and singleness of heart." See the whole argument of Mede on these verses.

2) Matt. xxvi. 26-28.

the Saviour, inculcated by the twelve—"Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you." "He that eateth my flesh, drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him."¹

And, finally, they continued steadfastly in the *Apostles' prayers*.

On looking over the accounts in the Acts, of the occasions when the Apostles preached to the people, we are struck with the circumstance, that at such times no prayers were used. This, however, was doubtless owing to the fact, that in these assemblies there were few or no persons to make the required responses.² But we must not thence conclude, that the Church at that period was without *public worship*. The truth is, that, even then, there was the consecrated "upper room," or "house of prayer," to which the true worshippers were accustomed, after the more public teaching, to retire for "prayer and breaking of bread." Here the Apostles, or their subordinate ministers, were wont to conduct the devotions of the faithful. In these devotions, or prayers, it was, that the first converts "steadfastly continued."

Thus we have an epitome of Christian duty, to

1) John vi. 53, 56.

2) For the character of public worship according to the Apostolic model, let the reader consult *Thorndike on the Public Service of God*; *Bennett on Prayer*; and a capital tract called the *Blacksmith's Letters*.

which, for their souls' welfare, the Apostolic Christians had recourse after confirmation.

Before applying the subject to ourselves, I must notice, somewhat at large, a remarkable feature in this system of practical godliness. *The Apostles are its centre*—the bond of the spiritual brotherhood—the standard-bearers, around whom rally the spiritual host. “There were added unto *them*,” by baptism, “three thousand souls.” And now it is, in “*their* doctrine, and fellowship, and breaking of bread, and prayers,” that they “continue steadfast.”¹ Here, then, not in one—not in St. Peter, as say the Romanists—but in all the Apostles, there is a centre of unity, a channel of divine authority, necessary to the essence and being of the holy Church. For, being added to *them*, in Scripture language, is the same as being added to the *Church*, or to the *Lord*.² Now, in what does this pre-eminence of the Apostles consist? And how does it interest ourselves at the present time? (1) In what does it consist? Not surely in their being “Head over all things unto the Church.” This position, I need not tell you, is occupied by Him,—and without rival, or associate,—who so “loved the

1) See on this point, the admirable charge of the Bishop of New Jersey
—THE PENTECOSTAL PATTERN.

2) Acts ii. 41, 47; v. 14.

Church that He gave Himself for it."¹ Neither in their possessing miraculous powers, and being the medium of God's revelation to His people. These gifts and functions they shared with others subordinate in office to themselves. Why, then, did the first Christians adhere so scrupulously to the Apostles, and make their adherence to them so vital to their own "growth in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ?" Verily, dear brethren, because their and our divine Master said to these Apostles—"As my Father sent me, so send I you."² Because He said to them—"Feed my sheep; feed my lambs."³ Because "He breathed on them, and said, 'Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.'"⁴ Because, as the Head of

1) Eph. v. 25.

2) St. John xx. 21. On this text, the *annotations of the Westminster Assembly* (a Presbyterian commentary) employ the following language—"He gave them a mission and charge before, but as preachers, to warn the Jews to hear Christ; but now he sendeth them as Apostles and ambassadors to other nations, committing the ministry to their execution which Himself had performed in teaching; He appointed them and *their successors* His surrogates in His absence. See Eph. iv. 11. And that their authority to preach might be understood to be *God's own ordinance*, He telleth them that as his Father sent Him, so He sendeth them to preach to all nations his name."

3) St. John xxi. 13, 14.

4) Ib. xx. 22, 23. On these verses, "Whosoever sins ye remit," &c., the same comment has these words, "This power is equally given to all of the dis-

the Church, and the divine source of all authority in it, He said to them—"All power is given unto **ME** in heaven and earth; go *ye*, **THEREFORE**, and disciple all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching *them to observe* all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo! I am with you *always, even unto the end of the world.*" The twelve Apostles, therefore, were adhered to by the first Christians, as the centre of unity in the Church, because of their *ministerial commission*. A commission to call upon men to repent and turn by faith to Christ—instru-

ciples and *their successors respectively*; first, in respect to the doctrine of faith and repentance, as the key of heaven committed to *their ministry*, which, according as it is received and obeyed, bindeth and looseth; if we repent and believe here on earth, God forgiveth in heaven; and it is the *minister's office* to preach the same in general, and to apply it *particularly* for the comfort and instruction of the truly penitent. *Secondly*, in respect to the power of *excommunication and absolution*, which is in discipline, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord."—1 Cor. v. 5. See further on this text the following, from the *Presbyterian Confession of Faith*, chap. xxx. 1, 2. "The Lord Jesus, as King and Head of His Church, hath therein appointed a government in the hand of Church officers, distinct from the civil magistrate. To *these officers* the *keys of the kingdom of heaven are committed*, by virtue whereof they have power respectively to *retain and remit sins, to shut that kingdom against the impenitent*, both by word and censures; and to *open it unto penitent sinners*, by the ministry of the Gospel, and by *absolution* from censures, as occasion shall require."

For the true, Catholic, Apostolic doctrine of *Sacramental Absolution*, see an able and conclusive sermon, with this title, by the Rev. Moses A. Curtis, Rector of St. Matthew's Church, Hillsboro', N. C.

mentally to unite them to Him by holy baptism—to teach them in His name to observe His precepts—to give them the seal of His Spirit in “the laying on of hands”—to impart to them His body and blood in the holy Eucharist—to lead them to the throne of His mercy in the House of Prayer—to absolve them in His name, and by His command, from repented sins, and to exercise over them the godly discipline of His Church. These are the things which we perceive, from their Master’s commission, and their own acts thus far, constitute the *peculiar* features of their Apostleship, and cause believers to rally around them, as “the ministers of reconciliation”—“The Ambassadors in Christ’s stead.”

(2.) But have we an interest in this high commission? Was it perpetuated, as first instituted in the Church, as an essential element of its existence and efficiency? We find it so, surely, after the time referred to in the text. For what other inference can be drawn from such language as this to the saints at Ephesus?—“When He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto *men*. And He gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers;—for the perfecting of the saints, for *the work of the ministry*, for *the edifying of the Body of Christ*; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the

Son of God, unto a perfect man unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ : that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about by every wind of doctrine ; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ ; from whom the whole body *fitly joined together, and compacted* by that which *every joint supplieth*, according to the effectual working in the *measure of every part*, maketh increase of the body, unto the edifying of itself in love."¹ What words could be found capable of setting forth more strongly the essential union of the Apostolic ministers and people to their mutual fellowship in Christ, their Head—"From which all the body by joints and bands, having nourishment ministered,

1) Eph. iv. 8—16. "In this passage," says Calvin, referring to the one cited above from Ephesians, iv. "he (St. Paul) shows that the ministry of men, which God employs in the government of the Church, is the *principal bond* which holds the faithful together in one body." He also indicates that the Church cannot be preserved in perfect safety, unless it be supported by those means which God has been pleased to appoint for its preservation. 'Christ,' he says, 'ascended up far above all heavens that he might fill all things.' And this is the way in which he does it. *By means of His ministers*, to whom He has committed this office, and on whom He has bestowed grace to discharge it, He dispenses and distributes His gifts to the Church. Whoever, therefore, either aims to abolish or undervalue this order, of which we are treating, and this species of government, attempts to disorganize the Church, or to *subvert and destroy it altogether*. *For light and heat are not so essential to the sun, nor any meat and drink so necessary to the nourishment and sustenance of the present life, as the Apostolical and pastoral office is to the preservation of the Church in the world.*"—*Instit. b, iv. chap. 3.*

increaseth with the increase of God."¹ If the holy ministry, as here represented, constitute "the *joints* and *bands* by which the whole body,—the Church,—is "*joined together and compacted*," and by which it receiveth "nourishment to its godly increase;" must it not follow, that without this ministry, the Church will fall apart and perish?

Besides, if it were not necessary to adhere to the Apostles' ministry, thus "keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," why warn the Churches, as did St. Paul and St. John, against "*false Apostles*?" against "those who say they *are Apostles, and are not*?" against those "who, having itching ears, heap to themselves teachers?" And why command Christians "to obey those that have the rule over them, and to submit themselves?" In the days of the Apostles, therefore, *fellowship with them* was certainly deemed essential to communion with the visible Church—to the enjoyment of the blessings of the Holy Covenant.

But did this necessity continue to exist after the Apostles were taken to their reward? If the Church be "the Church of the living God," as St. Paul saith; if it be "built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets," as St. Paul saith; if it be "the pillar and ground of the truth," as St. Paul saith; if to the

1) Colos. ii. 19.

Apostles, "always, even to the end of time," was committed, as Jesus saith, the work "to baptize all nations," to teach the people to "observe whatsoever He had enjoined,"—to impart to them the seal of the "laying on of hands,"—to administer to them His blessed body and blood"—"the nourishment which increaseth with the increase of God"—to "build them up in the unity of the Faith and the knowledge of the Son of God,"—to "silence gainsayers,"—to "reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine"—thus "making full proof of their ministry:" if these things be so, as God's word verily makes them, then, I ask, in the name of God I ask, how His Church can be perpetuated without that ministry which He hath made the foundation of that Church—yea, the channel of His word and sacraments and discipline in it?—or how it is possible for any man, except through this channel, to have visible, covenanted communion with Christ its divine Head?

And again, if the transmission of the Apostolic ministry be unessential, why did the Apostles receive from our Lord the power to perpetuate themselves, in their ministerial character and authority, through the promise, "Lo, I am with *you always*, even until the end of the world?"—which could be fulfilled only with respect to their *office* transmitted by perpetual suc-

cession?¹ And furthermore, why did the Apostles exercise this delegated power in actually appointing their successors—as in the cases of Timothy, and Titus, and Epaphroditus, and the angels of the Seven Churches—who received of the Apostles the like power to ordain deacons and presbyters, and to hand on, from age to age and from land to land, the same ministerial authority, to the awful period of Christ's second coming?²

1) "I am with you *always*." "Though your work be hard, I will assist you and *your successors in the ministry*, at all times, to the world's end."—*Annotations of the Westminster Assembly*. Matt. xxviii. 20.

Dr. Mason, a celebrated Presbyterian divine of New-York, observes, in commenting on this text—"Our Lord Jesus Christ delivered their commission to His Apostles in terms which NECESSARILY IMPLY A PERPETUAL AND REGULARLY SUCCESSIVE MINISTRY. 'Go teach *all* nations,' &c., and 'Lo, I am with you *always*,' &c. That this command and promise, though immediately addressed, were not limited, to the Apostles, is so obvious as almost to shame an argument. As the Apostles were shortly to 'put off their tabernacles,' the command could not possibly be fulfilled by them, it seems parallel with the *existence of nations*. It must, therefore, be executed by others, in every age, who are to carry on the work which the Apostles began; and who, by the very terms of the commandment, are identified with them in the *general spirit of their commission*. The promise, too, as well as the precept, reaches to the end of time; and, like the precept, embraces a SUCCESSIVE MINISTRY."

Dr. Hopkins, distinguished as the author of a system of Congregational divinity which bears his name, says, in his comments on this text, "*Lo, I am with you always*," &c., "This is sufficient positive proof that such a succession of ministry does in fact take place in the visible Church of Christ; and that this commission has been transmitted down from one to another, from that time to this day; and that *this succession has not been interrupted, and will not be, to the end of the world*."

2) For the Scripture proof of the appointment by the Apostles of their

And if this was not really done ; if the Apostolic succession was not kept up, after the Apostles' decease, why do a host of Apostolic Fathers say that it was ? Why does the holy Clement of Rome, " whose name," St. Paul declares, " is in the book of life," say, that " Christ was sent by God, and the Apostles by Christ ; and that the Apostles, knowing, through our Lord Jesus Christ, that there would be contentions about the *overseership*, *ordained* persons, that when they should be no more, approved men *should succeed* to their ministry ?"¹ Why does the disciple of St. John, the blessed martyr Ignatius, tell us, that Bishops are appointed by Christ, and that they are the highest of the three orders in the holy ministry, to whom the two lower grades must look, as the channel of all authority in the visible Church ?—saying, " He that obeys the *Bishop* and clergy, obeys Christ, who did constitute and ordain them."² " By the grace of God, and according to *the law of Jesus Christ*, he (the deacon, Sotion;) was obedient to the Bishop and *his* clergy."³ " Give ear to the Bishop, and to the

successors, see OUNDERDONK'S *Episcopacy Tested by Scripture*, and MARSHALL'S *Notes on Episcopacy*.

1) Irén. chap. xlv.

2) Epist. ad Eph., as quoted by Bishop TAYLOR, in his work on *Episcopacy*, which should be in the hands of every man desirous to know the TRUTH. A beautiful edition of this work has just been published by D. Appleton & Co., New-York.

3) Epist. ad Magnes.

presbytery, and to the deacons." "Do nothing without your Bishop."¹ "He that doeth any thing without the Bishop, worshippeth the devil."² "Follow the Bishop *all of you*."³ "Your duty is, according to the power of God the Father, to concede to him, (your Bishop) all homage; as I am aware *the holy presbyters do*."⁴ "My soul be security for those who submit to their Bishop, presbyters, and deacons." Why does this holy martyr make a return to the Bishop a mark of true repentance?—saying, "The Lord forgiveth all when they repent, if in repentance they return to Godly unity and to the counsel of the Bishop." Why does he make the validity of the sacraments depend upon the authority of Bishops?—affirming, that "it is not lawful without the Bishop, either to baptize, or celebrate the holy communion; but whatsoever he shall approve of, that is pleasing to God, secure and well done." "Let that be looked upon as a valid Eucharist which is either under the Bishop, or those to whom he may commit it."⁵ Why does he make the very existence of the Church depend upon this

1) Ad Trall, § 7, 8.

2) § 9.

3) Ad Smyrn.

4) Ad Magues, § 3.

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Apostolic order?—saying, that “without Bishops, priests, and deacons, there can be no Church properly so called.”¹ Why does he make adherence to the Bishop necessary to the safety of believers, and separation from him the mark of a reprobate mind?—uttering these words of caution: “Guard against these men, (heretics,) and guarded ye will be, if ye are not puffed up; nor separated from Jesus Christ our God, *and from the Bishop*. I put you on your guard, foreseeing the snares of the devil.”² “Be not deceived, my brethren,—all that are of God and Jesus Christ, these are *with the Bishop*.” “Whosoever followeth *one that maketh a schism he inheriteth not the kingdom of God*.”³

Why does St. Irenæus, instructed by the venerable Polycarp in the very words which, he says, that blessed martyr received from the lips of the Apostle St. John; why does he appeal to the succession of Bishops as a thing manifest even to the heretics and schismatics of his time; and, as the instrument of

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2) Ad Philad. § 3.

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preserving the true faith in the Church? "It is open to all men," says he, "in every Church, who desire to look upon truth, to behold the tradition of the Apostles, manifestly set forth in every part of the world;" and adds, as proof, "*We are able to enumerate those who were ordained Bishops, by the Apostles, in the Churches, and their successors, even down to ourselves.*"¹ "If this had been so," says he, alluding to certain mysteries which the heretics claimed as having been communicated to the faithful, beyond the teaching of the Church, "then specially and chiefly would they (the Apostles) have delivered them to those to whom *they had committed the very Churches themselves*. For it was their wish that *they* should be eminently perfect and irreproachable in all things, whom also they left to *be their own successors, handing on to them their own office of government.*"² "By this order and succession," he continues, "that tradition and that promulgation of the truth, which the Church derived *from the Apostles, has come down to our times.*"³ "The Sacred Scriptures have been preserved free from corruptions, suffering neither loss nor addition by means of *the successions of Bishops, to whom, in each several place, the Apostles delivered*

1) Adv. Hær. lib. iii.

2) Adv. Hæres. lib. iii. c. 3.

3) Ibid. Irenæus wrote only about 70 years after the death of St. John.

the Churches."¹ Why does he urge this consideration again and again upon the heretics—charging upon them the fact, that "their teachers *are far more recent than the Bishops* to whom the *Apostles delivered the Churches*,"²—and declaring, that "all who sever themselves from this succession have *fallen away from the truth*, and that they who divide and separate themselves *from the unity of the Church*, receive from God the punishment which was inflicted upon Jeroboam ;"³ and affirming, that "we must set ourselves to learn the truth, among those with whom *is that succession of the Church* which proceeds from the Apostles?"⁴ Why does the renowned Tertullian, twenty-five years later, appeal to this succession of Bishops, as the means, under God's providence, of ascertaining the truth amid the dissensions of error? Why does he direct, "See whether either of the senses (of Scripture urged by the heretics) can be *traced back to the times of the Apostles* ; and if there be any heresies claiming *Apostolical* antiquity, let them give account of the first beginning of their Churches ; let *them unfold the line of their Bishops so running down by succession from the beginning*, that their first Bishop may have had for his ordainer

1) Lib. iv. c. 43, as cited by Mr. Marshall.

2) Lib. v. c. 20.

3) Lib. iv. c. xlii.

4) Lib. iv. c. 45.

and predecessor some one of the Apostles—for in this manner *the Apostolic Churches* reckon their origin, as the Church of Smyrna produces Polycarp, appointed by St. John—as that of Rome, Clement, in like manner ordained by St. Peter; and as others, in like manner, point to those who were ordained *Bishops by the Apostles* to deliver down for them *the Apostolic seed*.¹ Why does the holy Cyprian, a few years later, say, in writing to the Bishop of Rome, “This, Brother, is, as it ought to be, our chief labor and study to the utmost of our power, to take care that that unity may still obtain, which was delivered by our Lord and by His Apostles to us, *their successors* ;” affirming that from the Apostolic power, “through the course of *succession*, the *ordination of Bishops*, and the other order of the Church is transmitted, so that the Church is built upon the *Bishops* ?”² Why does the great St. Austin, a little later, speak of men who are “severed from the Christian communion,” as being severed from that, “which, through the chairs of the Apostles and *the succession of the Bishops*, is, by an orderly course of propagation, diffused throughout the world ?”³ Why does he tell a Manichean, that *the succession of Bishops* from St. Peter down to his own day, in an unbroken line,” was argument enough

1) Cap. xxxii.

2) Ep. xxvii.

3) Ep. xlii.

with him to make and keep him a Catholic?"¹ Why does he exhort, "If you desire to follow that authority of the Scriptures which is esteemed before all, follow that which has come down *guarded, sanctioned and explained* universally from the times of the presence of Christ himself even to our own, by the agency of the Apostles, and *the manifest succession of the Bishops from their chairs*?"² Why do these holy men, with many others, from the very days of the Apostles—men of the highest eminence—men who laid down their lives for the truth, affirm,* in every part of the widely extended Church, these solemn facts; why appeal to the uninterrupted *succession* from *the Apostles of the Episcopal power in the Church*, against heretics, as proving the *validity of the Sacraments* and the unfailing *preservation and transmission* of the pure faith of God's word? If this

1) As cited in Marshall's Notes, p. 140, where another passage is adduced from St. Austin, in which he gives the succession of Bishops from St. Peter to his own time. De Donat. Dissidio, Ep. clxv.

2) Lib. xxxiii. c. vi. Speaking of certain apocryphal scriptures ascribed to certain of the Apostles, St. Austin says—"If they had been truly theirs, then would they have been acknowledged by that Church which, through the most unfailing succession of Bishops, abides constant to our own and to ages yet to come." Quoted by Mr. Marshall, the whole of whose *Notes on Episcopacy*, particularly as they relate to the testimony of the Fathers, are worthy of the attentive perusal of every Churchman. The work has just been republished in this country by the enterprising house of Appleton & Co., New-York.

succession could not then be shown, and if it was not generally relied upon as necessary to the things in proof of which it was thus adduced, why did not the heretics justify themselves by exposing the fallacy of the appeal to it? Why virtually admit it by endeavoring to patch up a succession for themselves? Do you say, a change in the order of the Church took place soon after the Apostles; that certain ambitious Presbyters assumed Episcopal power? But the writers of that period—whether Bishops, Priests, or Deacons—declare that no such change did take place; that the Episcopal authority was derived by succession *from the Apostles themselves*. Besides, could such change have taken place universally and simultaneously in all the Churches of Christendom—comprising at the death of St. John all the civilized portions of Europe, Asia, and Africa—and so silently as not to be noticed by a single proud spirit within the Church, nor a single captious and complaining enemy without? If the elevated position which the Bishops of the second and third century held was an unwarranted assumption of power over all others in the Church—and hence falsely and injuriously appealed to as marking the condemnation of all out of the Church—think you, that no Presbyter, deacon, nor layman would have been found to raise his voice against this assumption—no heretic, infidel, nor Jew

to complain of the false and injurious appeal to it, as determining the state of salvation through Christ? On the contrary, would all, either by their submission or their written assertion, have deliberately administered to their own degradation or condemnation? But suppose it possible, as it is *not*, that such an enormous assumption of power as is implied in the self-elevation of Bishops, could have happened without exciting opposition or complaint, either within or without the Church; what *motives* could have moved the Bishops themselves to aspire to it? Men, inordinately ambitious of distinction, are not induced to take unlawful steps to attain it, without strong worldly motives. But could any such have led men to desire and strive unlawfully for the high place of a Bishop? Privation and suffering of the most fearful kind lay in that road of honor—a crown of martyrdom, at the stake or in the lions' den, was the only reward to be hoped for in that struggle of ambition. Are we not then to trust the statements of these Bishops, confirmed by the statements of Presbyters and the submission of the whole Church—when they declare that they received *Episcopal authority in regular succession from the Apostles, and that this authority is necessary to the validity of the Sacraments, the verification of the truth, and the very existence of the visible Church?* If *not*, then they were guilty of

falsehood, and died to attest a falsehood; and then the whole testimony of the Church at that period was *false*. Then you must not trust it, as you now do, in determining the divine and canonical authority of the New Testament; and then, O then, your faith may be vain; your hopes of salvation undermined; the whole fabric of your spiritual blessings prostrate in the dust! Brethren, are you prepared for so terrible an issue?

But do you ask, has not the Apostolic succession failed since the days of these fathers? Let me inquire, *when? where? how?* The promise of the Almighty Saviour to those whom He placed in the Episcopal office, is, "Lo, I am with you *always*." Has that promise failed? He that has the temerity to affirm it, is bound surely to make the affirmation good—to show the time, and place, and manner of the failure; and to show it by most unquestionable proofs. For, in a case where the prevailing sense of God's word is to be impeached, and the united testimony of God's Church for the first three centuries is to be set aside as false, none but the clearest, most unquestionable evidence can be received. In such a case, mere assertion, however vociferous, however denunciatory, will go for nothing. Men may call the doctrine of Apostolic succession "unreasonable," "arrogant," "preposterous," "the unchurching

dogma," and the like ; but, till, by most irrefutable facts and arguments, they can prove it *false* ; till they can adduce a proof strong enough to show that a few straggling commentators of the present day understood the promise of Christ better than the inspired men did, to whom the promise was made—and the primitive constitution of the Church better than they did, who were actually employed, as the instruments under God, in constituting the Church and handing it down—they will do little to satisfy the public mind, now alive to this inquiry. But has any one been able, has any one pretended, to give such proof ? No facts are shown, no circumstances adduced ; but only *insinuations* made, *suspensions* thrown out, against the ever-living, ever-speaking truth of Apostolic succession. We ask objectors, *when* this succession failed ? And they insinuate, in reply, that it *must* have failed in the infancy of the Church—before the Apostolic line reached the Island of England. And this they *insinuate*, without the shadow of a fact upon which to base the insinuation ; yea, in the face of the most ample and convincing facts to the contrary—the facts, that the Church at that early period exercised, by requiring, under heavy penalties, two or three Bishops to be present at each consecration,¹ the most jealous

1) " Let a Bishop be ordained by two or three Bishops ; a presbyter and a

watchfulness over the Apostolical succession of her Episcopacy; and further, notwithstanding she was pressed and watched on every side by eagle-eyed enemies, her constant appeal against them to her ministerial authority derived by succession from the Apostles, is in no case questioned.

Again, we ask the objector *where* this succession failed? And, in reply, we have the insinuation that it was broken at the point of its entrance into the mother country. This insinuation, too, is made, not only without a syllable of proof, but also against proof. Let us examine the facts. The best primitive testimony makes St. Paul, or at least one of the Apostles, the founder of Christianity on the British shore, and to have left there the Episcopal power.¹ When, therefore, after the Saxon invasion, St. Augustine attempted the revival of the Church in that island, he found there *seven Bishops*.² Here then is one source of the Episcopal power from the Apostles. But again, St. Augustine derived his authority, as Bishop, from St. John, through Irenæus and the Bishops of Lyons and Arles,³ making in England a *second* line of Apostolic

deacon, and the rest of the clergy, by one Bishop."—1, 2, Apostolic Canons. See also Canons 24, 32, and 47.

1) Bedæ (ven.) Hist. Eccl. Usleri Antiq. Eccl. Brit. Camden's Britannia. Stillingfleet's Brit. Ch.

2) See Palmer's Treatise on Ch., vol. i. note p. 208.

3) See Note A at the end of this sermon.

succession ; and then, the line from St. Peter, through the Bishops of Italy, constituting in the mother country a direct and unbroken Episcopal succession from *three of the Apostles*—a succession, which, as is manifest from existing records, has come up through divers, unobstructed channels, to the period of the Reformation. But another insinuation is put forth, in the question, “ Was not this succession derived through the dark and corrupt period of papal domination in England ? ” Suppose it were so ; suppose the stream of Apostolic succession flowed through as muddy a soil as you have been wont to imagine—what then ? Did the Jewish corruptions destroy the validity of the Jewish Priesthood ? Did the treachery of a Judas invalidate his ministerial acts ? Is unworthiness in the minister considered by any of the Protestant denominations, however fearful to himself, as vitiating his ministrations to others ? If so ; and if unworthiness in the Romish hierarchy destroyed their power to hand on the ministerial commission to the time of the Reformation, then is not the ministerial commission from Christ inevitably *lost* ? For if Romish corruption destroyed Episcopal succession, it must also have destroyed *Presbyterial*, and all other ministerial succession ; yea, and the succession of the Christian Church itself. So that if this insinuation be good against the existence of Episcopacy in this country, it

presbytery, and to the deacons." "Do nothing without your Bishop."¹ "He that doeth any thing without the Bishop, worshippeth the devil."² "Follow the Bishop *all of you*."³ "Your duty is, according to the power of God the Father, to concede to him, (your Bishop) all homage; as I am aware *the holy presbyters do*."⁴ "My soul be security for those who submit to their Bishop, presbyters, and deacons." Why does this holy martyr make a return to the Bishop a mark of true repentance?—saying, "The Lord forgiveth all when they repent, if in repentance they return to Godly unity and to the counsel of the Bishop." Why does he make the validity of the sacraments depend upon the authority of Bishops?—affirming, that "it is not lawful without the Bishop, either to baptize, or celebrate the holy communion; but whatsoever he shall approve of, that is pleasing to God, secure and well done." "Let that be looked upon as a valid Eucharist which is either under the Bishop, or those to whom he may commit it."⁵ Why does he make the very existence of the Church depend upon this

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to this doctrine of succession, that it is Popish, and that the reformers themselves gave it up as untenable. Let us examine. Did Calvin consider Episcopacy *untenable* when he desired and endeavored to obtain it from England? When, in short, he affirmed in a letter to a Bishop of his time—"He who is made a Bishop proceeds from God himself; the office of Episcopacy was established by the authority, and regulated by the laws of God."¹ Did Luther, when he declared, that "the authority of Bishops is supported by the word of God?" Did Melancthon, when he wrote to Luther, complaining of Zuinglius, that "at one stroke he would abolish ceremonies and have no Bishops?" Did Beza, when he declared that "if there are any who reject the whole order of Episcopacy, God forbid that any man of sound mind should assent to the madness of such men?" Did Martin Bucer, when he said—"By the perpetual observation of *all Churches*, even from the Apostles' times, we see that it seemed good to *the Holy Ghost* that there should be one having the care of divers Churches and the whole ministry, by reason of which the name of *Bishop* was ascribed to him?"

And now to come to our own Catholic portion of

1) See Durell's View of the foreign reformed Churches, p. 162. For the evidence of Calvin's views of Episcopacy, and his endeavors to obtain it from England, see Note C, end of sermon.

the reformers; did Archbishop Cranmer and Bishop Latimer, with their associates, give up Apostolic succession, when, in a statement put forth under their hand, 1536, [Henry VIII.,] they affirm that "Christ and his Apostles did institute and ordain in the New Testament, certain, which, bearing spiritual power, authority and commission under Christ, to preach and teach the word of God unto His people; to administer the sacraments of God unto them, and by the same, to confer and give the Holy Ghost; to consecrate the blessed body of Christ in the sacrament of the Altar; to loose from sin all persons duly penitent for the same; to bind and excommunicate such as be guilty in manifest crimes and sins, and will not amend their faults; and to order and consecrate others in the same room, order, and office whereunto they be called and admitted themselves. And to the intent that the Church of Christ should never be destitute of such ministers, it was ordained and commanded by the *Apostles* that the same sacrament (of orders) should be ministered by the Bishops from time to time?" Did the same Archbishop give up this doctrine, in the subsequent reign of Edward, when, in a sermon, he declared, "The ministrations of God's word, which our Lord Jesus Christ Himself at first did institute, was derived from the Apostles unto others after them, by imposition of hands, and giving

the Holy Ghost, from the *Apostles' times to our days*?" Did the English fathers who framed our Ordinal, 1549, [Edward VI.] give up the doctrine of succession, when they declare—"It is evident unto *all men*, diligently reading Holy Scripture and ancient authors, that, from the *Apostles' time*, there have been these three orders of ministers in Christ's Church—Bishops, Priests, and Deacons; which officers were ever more had in such revered estimation, that no man might presume, or be suffered, to execute any of the said functions, except he be called, tried, examined, and admitted thereunto, by lawful authority, and hath had *Episcopal consecration or ordination*?" Did the Archbishop of Canterbury, with six other Bishops and certain presbyters, selected 1558, [Elizabeth,] to maintain the Protestant cause against the Papists, give it up, when they asserted that "*the Apostles' authority is derived upon after ages and conveyed to the Bishops, their successors*?"

You see, beloved brethren, how groundless is the charge, that the doctrine of *Apostolic succession* is a corrupt doctrine of Popery; how complete and strong is our proof of its necessity to the efficiency and being of "the Holy Catholic Church," and hence how deeply each one of us is interested in this "*Apostolic fellowship*," as "*members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven.*"

We see, then, the principle upon which the true Churchman acts in strictly adhering to the ministrations of those, who, by succession, have fellowship with the Apostles. Influenced by no paltry considerations of party strife, or of Pharisaic exclusiveness, he seeks to be governed only by the *will of God*; to cleave to the ministers of Apostolic succession, not because they are the ministers of *his* Church, but because, in his view, they are the ministers of the Church of "the living God"—commissioned, through this succession, to convey to him, instrumentally, certain benefits, which for his soul's health and salvation he is required to have, and which he can perceive no other way to obtain. Assured, for example, by God's word, that to be saved, he must have the grace of baptism, and believing, that the commission to baptize was given only to the Apostles and to their successors to the end of time, he durst not, as he would be faithful to God and to his own soul, seek that grace from any other source. The same is true in respect to the Holy Supper of the Lord.¹ To the Church-

1) The question is often put, "May I not take the communion with those whose ministers are not Episcopally ordained?" My uniform reply is, *Yes, if you can get it at their tables.* It is not a question of *fellowship*, but simply of *fact*. We may *love* these persons and take enjoyment in their society; but in order to take the holy supper from their ministers, they must have authority from Christ to give it. The simple question is, Have they this authority? As they do not even profess to have the *kind of*

man, therefore, the doctrine of Apostolic succession, so far from being a question of theory, or mere form, is strictly a *practical* one—involving, in his view, the most vital interests—connecting itself more or less with every act of the Christian, and every covenanted blessing of the Gospel of Christ.

2. And have we not a *right*, as Churchmen, to follow, in this matter, the dictates of our own conscience? Shall we be denounced and derided, in this land of freedom, and by persons boasting of their distinguished liberality, for our steadfast adherence to the ministry of Apostolic succession, when we believe in our hearts, that God requires it of us? Should we not rather, holding as we do, the necessity of this succession, subject ourselves to the just reproach of all honest men for cowardly inconsistency, were we to shrink from its maintenance, either in our teaching, or our action? Suppose, as the charge is, that the inculcation of this doctrine, on our part, implies the disobedience of others, or their destitution of the blessings which we believe to be inseparable from the doctrine. What then? Is the believer in Christian-

authority which we hold to be necessary to constitute a valid sacrament—or the sacrament which our Lord commands us to receive—it would certainly be worse than useless for us to go through the mere form of communicating with them. In regard to this, the Apostolic admonition may not be wholly inappropriate—"He that *doubteth* is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith, for whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Rom. xiv. 23.

ity to be charged with depriving the infidel of salvation, because he maintains, that to be saved, a man must have faith in Christ? Is the Presbyterian to be looked upon as excluding the Quaker from the blessings of the visible covenant, because he makes that baptism, which the Quaker rejects, the door of admission to these blessings? Or were the worshippers who taught that God had fixed His House of Prayer upon Mount Sion, guilty of excluding those of their brethren from this house, who separated from them, and worshipped on Mount Gerizim? And shall we, who hold to a divinely constituted Church—to an Apostolic ministry—to sacraments and ordinances established by Christ, as the channels of His grace and presence to our souls, be regarded as depriving those of these blessings, who have turned away from them, refuse to acknowledge them, and content themselves with a Church of mere human origin, a ministry of mere human appointment, and sacraments merely outward and formal in their character? Can we, in short, be said to *unchurch* them, when we admit that they have all the Church which they claim to have, and only call their attention to a Church of a higher character, of God's building, which they acknowledge they have not? Is it uncharitable in us, while we grant them to be in possession of all which they profess to have, to entreat them to accept

of more, which we believe God has provided for them as well as ourselves?

3. And here we are prepared to meet those who charge us with relying too implicitly upon the outward form. If this form, as we have proved, be prescribed by Infinite Wisdom, as the means for our attaining "the inward, spiritual grace," what else can we do, but rely upon it? We know our own ignorance—our extreme liability to stray from the path of life—and hence the great danger of employing for our salvation any means not provided in the Gospel; spiritual succor we must have—spiritual succor is offered us, through certain revealed channels; why shall we not adhere to these channels?—"steadfastly continue in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers?"

4. But it is said, Churchmen, who claim to have these high privileges, have no more religion than others. It may be so; and if it be, we can only say, in a spirit of anxious self-abasement, an awful account of abused mercies is awaiting our appearance at the judgment seat of Christ. But this cannot alter the truth of God; nor take aught from the value or necessity of His institutions. These rest upon His authority; and afford the only visible means of our return to His favor and fellowship, no matter what may be the measure of the faithfulness of those who enjoy

them. But before passing judgment upon such, it may be well to consider, that he only is truly religious, who submits to the requirements of the Christian religion. A man may be heated, and talkative, and bustling, and boastful, without being obedient to God. It was so with the Pharisees. They compassed sea and land—made an ostentatious display of their religion—made long prayers—"trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others;" and yet our Lord said concerning them, "Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven."

5. Finally, we come to the *true test* of a religious system, in reference to its effects upon men; a test, not consisting in the numbers or zeal of those which are brought to its standard—for by such a test Mahometans and Mormons might establish their claim to truth—but a test consisting in the power of the system, to subject its members, in a spirit of humble, self-sacrificing obedience, to the requirements and intimations of God's revealed will. In this view of it, it may be useful to consult the history of obedience to God. Let us then cast our eye over the Church of Christ from the beginning; and let us make the inquiry, and let us have the humility to make it honestly; Who in their lives have shown the most real, Gospel spirituality, brought forth most abundantly

the true, scriptural fruits of the Spirit? They who, in early times, implicitly relied upon God's institution; or such as, in our day of innovation, decry and depart from it? They, who *then*, in childlike simplicity and humbleness of mind, received the word as delivered to them from the Apostles through the holy Church, and were ready to sacrifice all, even unto their lives, for its sake; or they, who *now* "neglect to hear the Church," arrogantly reject her counsels—presumptuously set aside her catholic teaching, and refuse to receive aught by authority, even of Almighty GOD, except, as it is first subjected to the trial of their own superior wisdom, and pronounced true and reasonable and comprehensible by their own infallible judgment? They, who *then*, reverently and joyfully, through evil as well as good report, maintained communion with the Apostolic ministry, and thus with one another, were indeed linked together by the ties of a most heavenly charity—who breathed only thoughts of love, and spake only words of brotherly kindness—who administered of their substance to others, as each had need—and lived only for the things of Christ—nailing their affections to His cross—offering all they possessed at His altar, or holding it only at the disposal of His Church—counting it the greatest gain to devote it to the advancement of his kingdom and glory; or they who, *now*,

seem to pride themselves upon their dissent from Apostolic authority and practice—upon their independence in “speaking evil of dignities”—upon their freedom from the restraints of godly discipline; who count it a small thing to break the law of love—to indulge bitterness of spirit towards a brother—bitterness of language, unkindness of deportment; who “seek their own and not the things which are Jesus Christ’s;” seek for their sons the places of worldly honor and profit, while the “poor have *not* the Gospel preached to them,” and the harvest of their compassionate Lord is not gathered in; who regard their substance as their own—think not that they are stewards, and say in their hearts and givings, “who is Lord over us?” yea, whose souls are absorbed in worldly gain, whose thousands are held with a niggard hand, and whose mites doled out with a grudging spirit, while the needy groan under destitution—missionaries pine in want, or are forced from their perishing flocks from lack of bread, and the Church of Jesus—the poor man’s friend, the rich man’s hope—is compelled to become a beggar—an unwelcome and often unheeded beggar, at the rich man’s gate? Good God! Are these the fruits of Thy blessed Spirit—these the proofs that men now have the mind of Thy Christ? Forgive the presumption of

our empty claim! O forgive the blindness of thy erring people!

Did they show themselves formalists—destitute of the life of God in the soul—who in the early time so prized the Saviour's presence, so panted for His near fellowship in the worship of His house and at the altar of His love, as to press through every interposing obstacle of the world to *daily*, public prayer, and at least *weekly* communion in the holy Supper; impelled by a feeling expressed by an inspired worshipper of old; "one day in thy courts is better than a thousand—my soul hath a desire and a longing to enter into the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh *rejoice* in the living God?" Or do *they*, who *now* spend their breath in decrying the benefits and lowering to their carnal comprehension the deep meaning of the blessed sacrament—who discourage its frequent celebration, or employ their thoughts in self-apologies for its neglect; and actually begrudge to the Author of their being and their Christian hope, an hour daily in His temple—feeling in their hearts as the old exemplars in avarice, the Jews, felt, that the lame and the blind are good enough for heaven; and that it is "a vain and wearisome thing to serve God?"

Aye, and has God, in His word, showed Himself especially pleased with those who are careless of His

visible institutions; who call them *forms*, and take the liberty of altering or disregarding them? Did He show respect to the offering of the presumptuous Cain, who brought of the fruits of the ground, instead of the appointed firstling of the flock? Did He send healing to the leprous Naaman, while, in pride and anger, the man turned from the appointed waters of Jordan to his own boasted rivers of Damascus? Did He show favor to Corah and his company, when they rose up against His appointed ministers—charging them with an assumption of power, and asserting the equal sacredness and authority of the whole congregation? Did He bless King Saul when he thrust himself, unbidden and unconsecrated, into the priest's office? Did He bless Israel, when they departed from Mount Zion, the appointed seat of His glory, and built their altars upon the high places of Baal? Did He bless them, give them tokens of His love, when, commanded to offer the unblemished firstlings of their beasts, they brought to His altar the lame and the blind for sacrifice?

Beloved brethren, take the admonition. Rest assured, your wisdom and safety consist in strict and faithful adherence to what God has appointed—in steady though meek resistance to what man has invented. Your part in this day of "rebuks and blasphemy," is not to join in the senseless cry of treach-

ery in the Church, or of danger to her stability. She is as safe as the throne of God. The spirits from below may taunt her in her trial, and predict her downfall; but "the gates of hell will *not* prevail against her." "The LORD hath founded Zion, and the poor of His people may trust in it!" Your part is *not* to quail, or falter, or give heed to the clamor of the enemy; but *it is* to "put on the whole armor of God," and "stand fast, with one heart and one mind," brother with brother, hand in hand, shoulder to shoulder, "striving together for the faith of the Gospel." Your part is *not* loud talking, and tattling, and "angry reviling;" but it is silence and prayer, and reverence and adoration of God, who in judgment is passing through our host. It is *not*, being "busy-bodies in other men's matters;" but, in being "keepers at home," and setting your own house well in order. *Not* in recounting your neighbor's faults; but in humble and penitent acknowledgement of God's visitation upon his Church, for your own sins. *Not* in detecting heresy in the opinions of your brother; but in taking care that you understand and are well-grounded in your own. *Not* in charging apostacy from the Church upon him; but in anxiously inquiring, whether, while your eye has been fixed upon his movements, you have not been insensibly drifting away, under the pressure of dissent, from the true Catholic Faith, to which you

are so solemnly pledged at holy baptism—"the faith once for all delivered to the saints." Your part is to retire from the noise and strife of the outer world into your own closets and hearts—to study yourselves in the light of your Bible and your Catechism'—increase your knowledge, and strengthen your faith in your creeds—keep, in the fear of God, the law of the ten commandments—rejoice in the undeserved presence of Christ at His altar—and "pray always—pray without ceasing." It is your part, in short, to "continue steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers." "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God, your whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our LORD JESUS CHRIST." AMEN.

1) THE CATECHISM.—It is a pity that people don't look at their Catechism sometimes when they are grown up; for it is full as good for men and women as it is for children; nay, better: for though the answers contained in it are intended for children to repeat, yet the duties enjoined in it are intended for men and women to put in practice. It is, if I may so speak, the very *grammar* of Christianity, and of our Church; and they who understand every part of their Catechism thoroughly, will not be ignorant of any thing which a plain Christian need to know.—HANNAH MORE.

*

NOTE A, p. 158.

Below is the line of succession from St. John, through Augustine, to Bishop White, taken from most authentic records, and submitted to the test of the most searching criticism, in the belief that every attempt to prove it false will be utterly vain.

ST. JOHN.

1. Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna.

BISHOPS OF LYONS.

1. Pothinus.

2. Irenæus.

3. Zacharias.

4. Elias.

5. Faustinus.

6. Verus.

7. Julius.

8. Ptolemy.

9. Vocius.

10. Maximus.

11. Tetradius.

12. Verissimus.

13. Justus.

14. Albinus.

15. Martin.

16. Antiochus.

17. Elpidius.

18. Sicarius.

19. Eucherius, I.

20. Patiens.

21. Lupicinus.

22. Rusticus.

23. Stephanus.

24. Viventius.

25. Eucherius, II.

26. Lupus.

27. Licontius.

28. Sacerdos.

29. Nicetus.

30. Friscus.

31. ÆTHEMIUS. A. D. 560.

CANTERBURY.

32. A. D. 596. AUGUSTINE, Missionary to the Anglo Saxons, 33d was consecrated by VINCENTIUS, 24th Bishop of Arles, St. assisted by ÆTHEMIUS, 31st John. Bishop of Lyons.

34. Lawrence, . . . A. D. 605

35. Mellitus, . . . " 619

36. Justus, . . . " 624

37. Honorius . . . " 634

38. Adeodatus, . . . " 654

39. Theodore, . . . " 668

40. Brithwald, . . . " 693

41. Tatwine, . . . " 731

42. Nothelm, . . . " 735

43. Cuthbert, . . . " 742

44. Bregwin, . . . " 750

45. Lambert, . . . " 763

46. Æthelred, I. . . " 793

47. Wulfred, . . . " 803

48. Theogild or Feogild, " 830

consecrated June 5th, and died September 3d.

49. Ceolnoth, Sept., . . . " 830

50. Æthelred, II. . . " 871

51. Phlegmund, . . . " 891

52. Athelm, or Adelm, . . . A. D. 923	89. Simon Sudbury, . . . A. D. 1375
53. Wulfelm, . . . " 928	90. William Courtmay, . . . " 1381
54. Odo Severus, . . . " 941	91. Thomas Arundel, . . . " 1396
55. Dunstan, . . . " 959	92. Henry Chichely, . . . " 1414
56. Æthelgar, . . . " 968	93. John Stafford, . . . " 1443
57. Siricus, . . . " 989	94. John Kemp, . . . " 1452
58. Aluficus, or Alficus, . . . " 996	95. Thomas Boucher, . . . " 1454
59. Elphege, . . . " 1005	96. John Morton, . . . " 1486
60. Living, or Leoning, or Elkskan, . . . " 1013	97. Henry Dean, . . . " 1501
61. Agelnoth, or Æthelnot, . . . " 1020	98. William Wareham, . . . " 1503
62. Edsin, or Elsin, . . . " 1038	99. THOMAS CRANMER, . . . " 1533
63. Robert Gameticensis, . . . " 1050	100. Reginald Pole, . . . " 1555
64. Stigand, . . . " 1052	101. Matthew Parker, . . . " 1559
65. Lanfranc, . . . " 1070	102. Edmund Grindall, Dec. . . " 1573
66. Anselm, . . . " 1093	103. John Whitgift, . . . " 1583
67. Rodulph, . . . " 1114	104. Richard Bancroft, . . . " 1604
68. William Corbell, . . . " 1122	105. George Abbott, . . . " 1611
69. Theobald, . . . " 1138	106. William Laud, . . . " 1633
70. Thomas a Beckett, . . . " 1162	107. William Juxon, . . . " 1660
71. Richard, . . . " 1174	108. Gilbert Sheldon, . . . " 1663
72. Baldwin Fordensis, . . . " 1184	109. William Sancroft, . . . " 1677
73. Reginald Fitz-Joceline, . . . " 1191	110. John Tillotson, . . . " 1691
74. Hubert Walten, . . . " 1193	111. Thomas Fennison, . . . " 1694
75. Stephen Langton, . . . " 1207	112. William Wake, . . . " 1715
76. Richard Wethersfield, . . . " 1229	113. John Potter, . . . " 1737
77. Edmund, . . . " 1234	114. Thomas Secker, . . . " 1738
78. Boniface, . . . " 1245	115. Thomas Herring, . . . " 1747
79. Robert Kilwarby, . . . " 1272	116. Matthew Hutton, . . . " 1757
80. John Peckham, . . . " 1278	117. Frederick Cornwallis, . . . " 1768
81. Robert Winchelsey, . . . " 1294	118. John Moore, . . . " 1783
82. Walter Reynold, . . . " 1313	119. From St. John, is WILLIAM WHITE, of Pennsylvania, con- secrated February 4th, 1787, by John Moore, Archbishop of Can- terbury, assisted by the Arch- bishop of York, the Bishop of Bath and Wells, and the Bishop of Peterborough.
83. Simon Mepham, . . . " 1328	
84. John Stratford, . . . " 1333	
85. Thomas Bradwardine, . . . " 1348	
86. Simon Islip, . . . " 1349	
87. Simon Langham, . . . " 1366	
88. Wm. Wittlesey, . . . " 1368	

NOTE B, p. 161.

Dr. Lingard on Protestant Ordinations.

MR. EDITOR,—In your last number, a correspondent, under the signature of T. H., has called on me to show why I have asserted, (Hist. v. 155, note H.) that Archbishop Parker was consecrated on the 17th of December, 1559. Though I despair of satisfying the incredulity of one who can doubt, after he has examined the documents to which I have referred, yet I owe it to myself to prove to your readers the truth of my statement, and the utter futility of any objection which can be brought against it.

The matter in dispute is, whether Parker received, or did not receive consecration on the 16th of December; but the following facts are, and must be, admitted on both sides: 1st. That the Queen having given the royal assent to the election of Parker, by the Dean and the chapter of Canterbury, sent, on September 9, a mandate to six prelates to confirm and consecrate the Archbishop-elect, and that they demurred, excusing, as would appear from what followed, their disobedience by formal exceptions on points of law. 2d. That, on the 6th of December, she issued a second commission to seven Bishops, ordering them, or any four of them, to perform that office, with the addition of a manatory clause, in which she supplied, by her supreme authority, all legal or ecclesiastical defects on account of the urgency of the time, and the necessity of the thing; “temporis ratione et rerum necessitate id postulante;” words which prove how much the Queen had this consecration at heart; and certainly not without reason, for at that time, with the exception of Landaff, there was not a diocese provided with a Bishop, nor, as the law then stood, could any such provision be made without a consecrated Archbishop, to confirm and consecrate the Bishop elect. 3d. That four out of the seven Bishops, named in the commission, (they had been deprived or disgraced under Queen Mary, but had now come forward to offer their services, and solicit preferment in the new Church,) having obtained a favorable opinion from six counsel learned in the law, undertook to execute the commission, and confirmed Parker's election on the 9th of December.

Now, these facts being indisputable, what, I ask, should prevent the consecration from taking place? The Queen required it; Parker, as appears from his subsequent conduct, had no objection to the ceremony, and

the commissioners were ready to perform it, or rather under an obligation to do so; for by the 25th of Henry VIII., revived in the last Parliament, they were compelled, under the penalty of *præmunire*, to proceed to the consecration within twenty days after the date of the commission. Most certainly all these preliminary facts lead to the presumption that the consecration did actually take place about the time assigned to it, the 17th of December, a day falling within the limits I have just mentioned.

In the next place, I must solicit the attention of your readers to certain indisputable facts, subsequent to that period. These are—1st. That on the 18th (and the date is remarkable) the Queen sent to Parker no fewer than six writs, addressed to him, under the new style of Matthew, Archbishop of Canterbury, and primate and metropolitan of all England, and directing him to proceed to the confirmation and consecration of six Bishops elect for six different sees. This was the first time, during the six months which had elapsed since his election, that any such writ had been directed to him. What, then, could have happened, just before the 18th, to entitle him to this new style, and to enable him to confirm and consecrate Bishops, which he could not do before? The obvious answer is, that he himself had been consecrated on the 17th. 2d. That on the 21st, he consecrated four new Bishops, on the 21st of January, five others, two more on the 2d, and two on the 24th of March. Can we suppose that so much importance would be attached to consecration given by him, if he had received no consecration himself? or, that the new Church would have been left so long without Bishops at all, if it had not been thought necessary that he, who was by law to consecrate the others, should previously receive that rite? 3d. That afterward, at the same time with the new prelates, he obtained the restoration of his temporalities, a restoration which was never made till after consecration. 4th. That he not only presided at the convocation, but sat in successive parliaments, which privilege was never allowed to any but consecrated Bishops. In my judgment, the comparison of these facts, with those that preceded the 17th of December, forms so strong a case, that I should not hesitate to pronounce in favor of the consecration, if even all direct and positive evidence respecting it had perished.

But there exists such evidence in abundance. That Parker was consecrated on the 17th of December, is asserted, 1st, by Camden, (i. 49,) 2d, by Goodwin, (*De Præs*, p. 219,) 3d, by the Archbishop himself, in his work, *De Antiquitate Britannicæ Ecclesiæ*, published in 1572, three years before

his death, or if that book be denied to be his, in his diary, in which occurs the following entry in his own hand, "17th Dec. Ann, 1559, consecratus sum in Archiepiscopum Cantuariensem Hue! Hue! Domine Deus, in quas tempora servasti me!" (Strype's Parker, App. 15.) And 4th, by the Archbishopal Register, a record which details the whole proceeding, with the names of the Bishops, of their chaplains, and of the official witnesses. In truth, it descends to so many minute particulars, that I think, Mr. Editor, it must be the model after which are composed the descriptions of consecrations, ordinations, and dedications, which we have the pleasure of perusing in your pages. In one respect only must it yield the superiority to them. It names not either the organist or the singers.

Now to this mass of evidence, direct, and indirect, what does your correspondent oppose? That Harding and Stapleton, and the more ancient Catholic controvertists, denied that Parker was a Bishop. That is, indeed, true; but I always understood that their objections (which is certainly the case, with respect to the two passages quoted in your last number,) referred to the validity, not to the *fact* of his consecration; and if Dr. Milner has chanced to assert the contrary, I fear that he wrote it hastily, and without consideration. I am not aware of any open denial of the fact, till about fifty years afterward, when the tale of the foolery supposed to have been played on the Nag's Head, was first published. In refutation of that story, Protestant writers appealed to the Register; their opponents disputed its authority; and the consequence was, that in 1614, Archbishop Abbot invited Colleton, the Archpriest, with two or three other Catholic missionaries, to Lambeth, and submitted the register to their inspection, in presence of six of his own Episcopal colleagues. The details may be seen in Dodd, ii. 277, or in Godwin, p. 219.

Your correspondent assures us that the register contains "so many inaccuracies and points at variance with the history of the times, as manifestly prove it a forgery." Were it so, there still remains sufficient evidence of the fact. But what induces T. H. to make this assertion? Has he examined into all the circumstances of the case? Or does he only take for granted the validity of the several objections which Dodd, without expressing any opinion of his own, has collected from different controvertists? However that may be, I have no hesitation in saying, that all those objections are founded on misconception or ignorance; that the register agrees in every particular with what we know of the history of the times; and

that there exists not the semblance of a reason for pronouncing it a forgery.

Your readers will observe that in this communication I have confined myself to the fact of Parker's consecration ; whether it was valid or invalid, according to the Catholic doctrine, is a theological question, with which, as a mere writer of history, I had no concern.

Catholic Diary.

JOHN LINGARD.

NOTE C, p. 162.

The reader will not here need a lengthened detail of the views of Calvin, Beza, Melancthon and their coadjutors, and this has just been placed before the public in MARSHALL'S *Notes on Episcopacy*, p. 183, &c., by D Appleton & Co., New York ; a book well calculated to meet the necessities of the time. In reference to the views of Calvin, the Author would beg leave to submit, in confirmation of what he says of them in this sermon, the substance of a letter which he had occasion to write in defence of similar remarks in 1841.

My *first* position was that " Calvin favored Episcopacy." In support of it, I adduced Calvin's own words. And now, that the people may see that I was guilty of no unfairness, I here repeat what he says on the point.

1. In his commentary upon 1 Tim. iv. 14, a passage so much relied upon by Presbyterians—he gives an interpretation which makes it perfectly consistent with the *Episcopal* character of Timothy.

2. In his commentary upon a text in the Epistle to Titus, he uses this language—" We learn, also, from this place, that there was not then such an *equality* among the ministers of the Church, but that some *one* had the pre-eminence in authority and counsel."

3. In his commentary on Gal. ii. 9, he represents it as " highly probable that St. James was *prefect* of the Church of Jerusalem." Now a *prefect* is a chief and permanent ruler of others.

4. In a letter to an old friend, who had become a Bishop in the Church of Rome, (See Durell's view of the Foreign Reformed Churches, p. 163,) Calvin expressly recognizes Episcopacy as of divine institution. His words are ;—" *Episcopatus ipse a Deo profectus est Episcopi munus Dei autoritate constitutum est et legibus definitum ;*"—" He who is made a Bishop

proceeds from God himself. The office of Episcopacy was established by the authority, and regulated by the laws of God."

5. Finally, in his work *de necessitate Reformandarum Ecclesiarum*, Calvin holds this remarkable language:—"If they will give us such an Hierarchy, in which the Bishops have such a pre-eminence^{as} that they do not refuse to be subject unto Christ, &c. &c., then I will confess that they are worthy of all ANATHEMAS, if any such shall be found, who will not reverence it, and submit themselves to it with the utmost obedience." (See JOANNIS CALVINI *tractatus theologia omnes, in unum volumen certis classibus congesti, &c.*, p. 69.) The length of this and other passages has prevented my giving the original. The translation, however, I believe will be found faithful.

The above testimony, from Calvin's own pen, I shall not hesitate to consider sufficient, with all candid persons, to justify my declaration, that Calvin was favorable to Episcopacy.

My second position was, that he endeavored to obtain Episcopacy from the English Church. My reasons are as follows:

1. Calvin desired, as is manifest, to retain the Episcopal regimen in his system of Church Government. See his explicit language in the Confession of Faith, which he composed in the name of the French Churches. In the articles drawn up by the delegates of whom Calvin was one, to the Conference at Worms, by order of Charles V., are the following words—"Our learned men have expressly yielded ordination to Bishops." [See Articles.] Calvin severely censures the clergy of Collen, for endeavoring to put their head Bishop out of his place, inasmuch as he had declared in favor of reformation. [Vide CALV. *Epist.*, page 517.] Writing to Ithavius, a Polish Bishop, whom he styles illustrious and reverend Lord Bishop, so far from advising him to lay aside his Episcopacy, he exhorts him to consider what place he holdeth, and what burden is imposed upon him. [Vide JOHANNES CALVINUS *illustri et reverendo Domino Jacobo Ithavio Episcopo Epist.*, page 287.] In his Epistle to the King of Poland, Calvin expresses his approbation of all the degrees of the Hierarchy of the Ancient Church; and he seems to advise the King to introduce the system into his own Dominions. [Vide CALV. *Sereniss. Regi. Polon.*]

2. Having by untoward circumstances been unable to retain in the Genevan System the Episcopal regimen, Calvin made, as will appear from the following fact, an actual attempt, at one period, to introduce the Episcopacy from

England. This fact is related by the excellent and accurate historian Strype; a fact that has remained unquestioned for more than two centuries. "How Calvin stood affected in the said point of Episcopacy, and how readily and gladly he and other heads of the Reformed Churches would have received it, is evident enough from his writings and Epistles." [See STRYPE'S *Life of Bishop Parker*, pp. 69, 70.] "They (the foreign Protestants) took such great joy and satisfaction in this King (Edward VI.) and his establishment of Religion, that Bullinger, and Calvin, and others, in a letter to him offered to make him their Defender, and to have Bishops in their Churches, as there were in England; with a tender of their service to assist and unite together." [See STRYPE'S *Memorials of Cranmer*, page 270.] This scheme seems to have been defeated by a forgery of the Papists. The last letter of Calvin on the subject was intercepted by Bonner and Gardner, two Romish Bishops, who returned such an ungracious answer as offended Calvin and led him to give up the project. This is affirmed in a paper in the handwriting of Archbishop Abbot, who was a friend to Calvin, and was apologizing for him in this very document; which was found in the archives of Lambeth. The subjoined is the paper as published by Strype; [*Life of Parker*, page 70.] "Perusing," says the Archbishop, "some papers of our predecessor, Matthew Parker, we find that John Calvin and others of the Protestant Church of Geneva and elsewhere, would have had Episcopacy, if permitted. And whereas John Calvin had sent a letter in King Edward VI.'s reign, to confer with the Clergy of England about some things to this effect, (that is getting the Episcopacy,) two Popish Bishops, viz. Bonner and Gardner, intercepted the same; whereby Calvin's overture perished. And he received an answer, as if it had been from the Reformed divines, wherein they checked him and slighted his proposals. From which time John Calvin and the English Church were at variance in several points which otherwise, through God's mercy, had been qualified if those papers of his proposals had been discovered unto the Queen's majesty during John Calvin's life. But being not discovered until, or about the sixth year of her Majesty's reign, Her Majesty much lamented they were not found sooner; which she expressed before her council at the same time in the presence of her great friends, Sir Henry Sidney and Sir Wm. Cecil."

From all this, it appears that Calvin was quite disposed to reform the Church on the ground of Episcopacy—that he deliberately offered to do so—and that he finally proceeded on a different system from the difficulty, as he

supposed—having been, in his view, repulsed in his supplication to England—of procuring Bishops without yielding to the enormous exactions of the Church of Rome ;—and hence, it appears, that I had abundant reason for both parts of the declaration—that John Calvin was favorable to Episcopacy, and that he endeavored to obtain it from the English Church.

I cannot conclude my present remarks, however, without furnishing a few passages from the admirers of Calvin, to show that I have not misunderstood the citations from his works above. Mons. Daille, a friend and defender of Calvin, writes thus explicitly :—" Calvin himself honored all Bishops that were not subjects of the Pope, &c., such as were the prelates of England. We confess that the foundation of their charge is good and lawful, established by the Apostles according to the command of Christ." [BINGHAM's *French Church's Apology*, &c.] Mons. De Le Angle, another of Calvin's followers—in a letter addressed to the Bishop of London, writes thus—" Calvin, in his treatise of the necessity of a reformation, makes no difficulty to say, that if there should be any so unreasonable as to refuse the communion of a Church that was pure in its worship and devotion, and not to submit himself with respect to its Government, under pretence that it had retained an Episcopacy qualified as yours is ; there would be no censure or rigor of discipline that ought not to be exercised upon them." [STILLINGFLEET's *Unreasonableness of Separation*.] Jacobus Lectius, a Senator of Geneva, and public reader in the University, writes, in a book dedicated to the Senate, &c., as follows :—" We maintain that these are true and lawful Bishops whom St. Paul describes in his Epistles to Timothy and Titus, and we do not deny, but that there were such formerly in that great kingdom of Great Britain, and at this very day, there are such Bishops there. Neither was there any of our divines, I think, who ever denied it to be a most ancient custom in the Church, from the very times of the Apostles ; to wit, that one should have the chief care of the Church, sitting, as it were, at the helm of the sacred ship. And they profess, by their public writings, that it was mad-like to think meanly of the order of orthodox Bishops, to whom therefore our men, and amongst them, Calvin, Bucer, Beza, and others, have deferred all manner of honor and affection." [See DURELL's *View*, &c., pp. 168, 170.]

The good Bishop Hall, in his *Divine Right of Episcopacy*, part 1, sec. 2, meditating upon Calvin's views as contrasted with the Presbyterian hatred of Episcopacy in his own day, breaks out in the following strain :—

"You hear how judicious and moderate Calvin's opinion was then ; and had he been in your late pretended assembly at Glasgow, or this of Edinburgh, (you see) what vote he would have given. How happy were it for your Churches if all among you, who so much honor his name, would as readily submit to his judgment. Sure I am, had it been so with you, you would have been as far from defying Episcopacy in holy professors, as you are now from truth and peace."

As strong efforts are now made to inculcate the idea, that the present views of dissenters—especially the Methodist—in regard to Episcopacy or *Apostolic succession*, are the same with those of the distinguished founder of this latter sect, I shall need no apology for calling the attention of my readers to the following presentation of the views of Mr. Wesley, as also of Dr. Adam Clarke, made by a true and able hand :—

"The Rev. JOHN WESLEY, the distinguished Father of Methodism, had no idea of becoming the founder of a numerous and powerful sect, which would assume, as it has done in this country, the name of the Methodist Episcopal Church. For, although less consistent and decided in his Church principles than his brother Charles, it was, (as the inscription on his tombstone declares,) the avowed purpose of 'his life and writings, to revive, enforce, and defend the *pure apostolical doctrines and practices of the Primitive Church*.' In advocating the doctrines and discipline of the Church of England, in opposition to the corruptions of the Church of Rome, he does it upon the sound principle contained in the following sentence : 'Scripture and indubitable antiquity are the authority we appeal to ; thither we refer our cause ; and can heartily conclude with that of Vincencius Lirrens, *That it is to be held, which hath been believed every where, always, by all.*' *

† "Reasoning upon this sound principle, we do not wonder at his declaration, 'We account Ordination to be of *Divine institution*, and that by it a *ministerial commission is conveyed* ;' † nor to hear him answer when asked by what authority he preached the Gospel ? 'By the authority of Jesus Christ, *conveyed to me by the (now) Archbishop of Canterbury, when he laid*

* Wesley's Works, New York edition, by J. & J. Harper, 1827 ; vol. x. p. 49.

† Vol. x. p. 47.

his hands upon me and said, Take thou authority to preach the Gospel, &c.²⁴ In answer to the Romish error that the validity of the sacraments depends on the *intention* of the administrator, Mr. W. says: 'It follows that whenever this is not his intention, the sacrament is null and void. And so (according to the Romish belief that orders are a sacrament) there is no certainty whether the Priest, so called, be a *real Priest*. For who knows the intention of him that ordained him? And if he be not, all his ministrations are of course null and void.' But, says Rome, 'in case of necessity, Baptism may be administered by women, yea, by Jews, &c.' 'No,' says Mr. W., 'Our Lord gave this commission only to the Apostles, and *their successors in the ministry*.'† In his sermon on the 'Catholic Spirit,' he says: 'I believe the *Episcopal* form of Church government to be *scriptural and Apostolical*.'‡

"It having been objected that Mr. Wesley's licensing lay preachers and exhorters, was a violation of the order of the Church, by thrusting men into the Priesthood unordained, his answer was: 'They no more take upon themselves to be Priests than to be Kings. They take not upon them to administer *the sacraments*, an honor peculiar to the Priests of God. Only according to their power they exhort their brethren to continue in the grace of God.'[§]

"A certain Mr. Hall, had written to Mr. W. and his brother, 'earnestly pressing them to renounce the Church;' 'for non-compliance with which advice,' says Mr. W. 'he soon renounced us.' To some of this gentleman's arguments or reasons, the following was the reply of Mr. W.: 'You think, first, that we undertake to defend some things which are *'not defensible by the word of God.'* You instance in three: on each of which we will explain ourselves as clearly as we can.

"1. 'That the *validity* of our *Ministry* depends on a *succession* supposed to be from the Apostles, and a commission derived from the Pope of Rome and his *successors or dependents*.'

"We believe it would not be right for us to administer, either Baptism or the Lord's Supper, unless we had a *commission* so to do from those Bishops, whom we apprehend to be in a *succession from the Apostles*. And yet we allow, these Bishops are the successors of those, who are dependent on the Bishop of Rome. But we would be glad to know on what reasons you believe this to be 'inconsistent with the word of God?'

* Vol. viii. p. 273. † Vol. x. p. 57. ‡ Vol. v. p. 416. § Vol. viii. p. 356.

"2. 'That there is an *outward priesthood*, and consequently an *outward sacrifice*, ordained and offered by the Bishop of Rome, and his *successors or dependents* in the Church of England, as vicars and *vicegerents* of Christ?'

"We believe that there is, and always was, in *every Christian Church* (whether dependent on the Bishop of Rome or not) an *outward Priesthood* ordained by Jesus Christ, and an *outward sacrifice* offered therein, by men authorized to act as *ambassadors of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God*.

"On what grounds do you believe that Christ has abolished that *Priesthood and Sacrifice*?

"3. 'That this *Papal Hierarchy and Prelacy* which still continues in the Church of England, is of *Apostolical institution*, and authorized thereby; though not by the *written word*.'

"We believe that the *three-fold order of Ministers* (which you seem to mean by *Papal Hierarchy and Prelacy*) is not only authorized by its *Apostolical institution*, but also by the *written word*.

"Yet we are willing to hear and weigh whatever reasons induce you to believe the contrary."*

"It is no marvel that one who entertained the views above expressed should have firmly resisted all the temptations ever offered him to withdraw from the Church; while he so earnestly rebuked every tendency on the part of his followers to do so, that he actually proposed the extreme measure of prohibiting his preachers and assistants from ever '*frequenting any dissenting meeting*,' as constituting in itself a virtual withdrawal from the Church.†

"His amusing but caustic letter to Mr. AssURY, on finding that he and Dr. Coke, who had been appointed by him as *Superintendents* of the Methodist Societies in America, had transformed themselves into *Bishops* of a new Church, has been often published, and speaks his sentiments in no equivocal terms. The repeated attempts made to separate the Methodists from the Church, as often called forth his rebuke and frown; nor did they meet with more favor from the Conference. His famous '*twelve reasons against separation from the Church*,' were often and extensively published by him, and are too well known to be recited here. Indeed, no one acquainted with Mr. Wesley's life and writings can be ignorant of his firm adherence

* Vol. ii. pp. 74 and 75.

† Vol. x. p. 91.

to 'the Church,' as he was wont to call it, in despite of persecutions from *within*, and solicitations from *without*.

"But lest some should suppose that this was merely the result of education, and confined to his earlier ministry, we may state that he solemnly confirmed and reiterated the same sentiments in the 87th year of his age, a little more than a year before his death, in the following words. And this is no way contrary to the profession which I have made above these fifty years. *I never had any design of separating from the Church. I have no design now.* I do not believe the Methodists in general design it, when I am no more seen. I do, and will do, all that is in my power to prevent such an event. Nevertheless, in spite of all that I can do, many of them will separate from it; (though I am apt to think, not one-half, perhaps not a third of them.) These will be so bold and injudicious, as to form a separate party, which consequently will dwindle away, into a dry, dull, separate party. In flat opposition to these, I declare once more, that *I live and die a member of the Church of England; and that none who regard my judgment or advice, will ever separate from it.*

JOHN WESLEY.

'London, Dec. 11, 1789.'

"Such was the final testimony of John Wesley in favor of that Church whose orders he had received; and one of the brief ejaculations he uttered upon his death-bed was, 'BLESS THE CHURCH.'

"That *Dr. Adam Clarke*, one of the bright lights of Methodism, had no more confidence than Wesley in any but Episcopal Ordination, is evident from his saying, in a letter to a friend: 'Here I am, preaching the Gospel, *without holy orders, without pretended holy orders, and without pretension to holy orders.*' His fixed opinions on the subject are doubtless given in his commentary upon the Bible. What were they? 'Episcopacy in the Church of God is of *Divine appointment*; and should be maintained and respected. Under God these should be supreme governors in the Church, as well as in the State. The State has its Monarch; the Church has its Bishop: one should govern according to the laws of the land, the other according to the word of God.' 'As the *Deacon* had many private members under his care, so the *Presbyter* or *Elder* had several Deacons under his care, and the *Bishop* several Presbyters. Deacon, Presbyter and Bishop, *existed in the Apostolic Church*; and may therefore be considered of *Divine origin*.'

"We are aware that many things may be referred to in the lives and writings of Mr. Wesley and his early followers, which would appear incon-

gruous with the quotations above made. But we know that great and good men are often inconsistent with themselves ; this, however, does not impair the weight of their testimony, when their solemn and deliberate judgment has been expressed in favor of principles which are, in their own nature, sound and unchangeable."

That Coke and Asbury, and the Methodists who immediately followed Wesley, did not regard "Episcopal succession" as unimportant, is evident from the minutes of the Conferences at the time. If, as the modern Methodists say, this succession be "preposterous," "a mere figment," &c., &c., why were Coke and Asbury, and their coadjutors, so careful to set forth their claim to it, by styling themselves in their minutes—not only *Bishops*, but "*Bishops by regular succession*?" When did they first make the discovery that this succession was a "*mere fiction*?" Was it not when the evidence was forced upon them, that *they had no title to it? That their own claim to Episcopal authority by succession, was empty and wholly incapable of defence?*



O ALMIGHTY GOD, WHO HAST KNIT TOGETHER THINE ELECT IN
ONE COMMUNION AND FELLOWSHIP, IN THE MYSTICAL BODY OF THY
SON CHRIST OUR LORD; GRANT US GRACE SO TO FOLLOW THY
BLESSED SAINTS IN ALL VIRTUOUS AND GODLY LIVING, THAT WE MAY
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Extract from Editor's Preface.—The present author states arguments and adduces authorities which have often been employed before; but the manner is his own, and it is certainly a happy one. His Introduction, too, places the question in a striking point of view. But the part of the work which gives it special interest is, the fifth chapter, where an important consideration is brought forward, and one which cannot but have great weight with all thoughtful observers of the times; and this is the practical working of all those systems of church-government which have excluded the Episcopacy.



